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Official Records

21st Meeting
Thursday, 6 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Address by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah: My congratulations, Mr. President, on your election to this high office. You are well known in United Nations circles and your election is a tribute to your country, Côte d'Ivoire, and to you.

May I also congratulate Ambassador Insanally and thank him for his great contribution. We are proud that a fellow member of the Commonwealth has served the United Nations with such skill and distinction.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome South Africa back to the General Assembly. We have long admired the courageous leadership of President Mandela in his country's struggle for freedom. He now faces equally great challenges in rebuilding South Africa. We wish him success.

I must also congratulate the people of Palestine on their courage and vision in signing the historic Peace Agreements. The people of Palestine also face the challenge of putting their painful past behind them and of building a peaceful and prosperous future. To succeed they will need the support of the international community and the United Nations.

In our region the people of Cambodia are also struggling to build a new future. The United Nations played a crucial role in Cambodia, but some obstacles remain. My country supports the efforts of King Norodom Sihanouk and his Government to rebuild and reunite Cambodia. We wish them success.

The end of the cold war has placed economics at the top of the international agenda. The challenge is how to increase economic cooperation through more trade and investment. The world now needs a stable international environment to allow this to happen. We must resist the trend towards protectionism. Instead, we must encourage and reward those who liberalize and open up their economies.

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The United Nations and its specialized agencies can help in this. But the end of the cold war has stretched the resources of the United Nations. Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia, Haiti and other trouble areas are consuming much of the limited financial and manpower resources of the United Nations, and this has reduced its role in promoting development. It is tragic that problems of development are on the back-burner. This is not the fault of the United Nations. The United Nations can do no more than its Members are willing to do.

One way to reduce the drain on United Nations resources is for regional organizations to work with the United Nations in accordance with Chapter VIII of its Charter. We may not have fully used the potential of Chapter VIII. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, regional arrangements can help to reduce the burden on the United Nations. The United Nations takes the primary responsibility for international peace and security, but regional organizations such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) can reduce its load through preventive diplomacy and regional economic cooperation. They can complement the United Nations.

Of course, there are many regional organizations; every region has its own. But not all of them work. If we are to realize the potential of Chapter VIII, we need fresh approaches to regional arrangements. Regional organizations must be realistic in their goals. They have to build a framework for cooperation which suits their conditions.

ASEAN, of which Brunei is a member, has achieved some success. ASEAN offers one possible vision of regional cooperation and development. We do not have set institutions and legal undertakings, as does the European Union. Our aim is more modest. We seek to foster a culture of cooperation. Through consultation, consensus and cooperation, we have been able to contain, resolve or reduce our differences. We have concentrated on working together for our common interests. This is a process of enlarging a set of shared values. Since ASEAN was formed in 1967, its members have evolved an informal style of sorting out their differences. Cooperation is not the result of formal agreements but comes from a strong sense of common purpose.

We are not without our problems. Most ASEAN countries have unresolved territorial questions with one another. Sensitive questions of ethnicity, culture and religion are often involved in our relations with each other. We do not deny the existence of these issues, but we continue to work together wherever we can. Differences among us do not stop cooperation for mutual benefit.

It is wiser for regional organizations to start with less ambitious goals. It took ASEAN a quarter of a century, from 1967 to 1992, to establish habits of close cooperation and consultation. Only after this was achieved did ASEAN feel confident enough to take the significant, though modest, decision to set up an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) within 15 years from 1992. We are now discussing how we can speed up AFTA and complete it within 10 years.

We have also formed a number of growth triangles straddling the adjacent territories of three or more member countries. We are all members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC), an organization for economic cooperation and trade liberalization, which will give greater opportunities to all. Because of such cooperation and the general stability of the region, trade and investments have greatly increased. All ASEAN countries are industrializing rapidly, with high growth rates.

I offer these comments on ASEAN in the hope that they can contribute to discussions that will strengthen the United Nations system. ASEAN is well aware of its own limits and limitations. ASEAN does not exist in a vacuum. We could not have succeeded without a favourable international environment.

ASEAN is not an alternative to the United Nations. Where ASEAN succeeded, as in Cambodia, it was because we worked with the major Powers within a framework defined by the United Nations. Otherwise, we would have failed. We will and must continue to work closely with the United Nations. All regional institutions need the over-arching framework of the United Nations. The United Nations, and particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, must retain primary responsibility for international peace and security.

No regional organization can succeed if it shuts itself off from the world. Our goal is an ASEAN of all South-East Asian countries. We are gradually creating what can be loosely described as a culture of peace and security in South-East Asia. We hope to extend it by linking up with other regional organizations in the Asia-Pacific region. ASEAN wants to engage all the major Powers in a pattern of constructive relations throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The ASEAN Regional Forum, inaugurated in Bangkok in July, brings together all major and middle-sized Powers - the United States, Japan, the European Union, China, Russia, Canada, Australia, South Korea and New Zealand - in a common framework. We want the United Nations and all major Powers to associate themselves with ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is approaching. It is an appropriate occasion for us to rethink how we can strengthen the United Nations system to enable it to face successfully the challenges of the twenty-first century. I offer my comments in the spirit of contributing to our common goal of strengthening an open world that will benefit all countries.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam for the statement he has just made.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Rwandese Republic

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Rwandese Republic.

Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Rwandese Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Rwandese Republic, His Excellency Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Bizimungu *(interpretation from French):* Like those who have preceded us in addressing the Assembly, we wish first of all to offer you, Mr. President, our warmest congratulations on your election to preside at this session, which attests to the trust and esteem your eminent qualities and competence inspire in the international community. Your election also constitutes a solemn tribute to your fraternal, friendly country, Côte d'Ivoire, for its important role in the concert of nations and its firm determination to contribute to the steady strengthening of cooperation. We wish to assure you that the Rwandese delegation will spare no effort to make its modest contribution to the success of your task.

We also wish to avail ourselves of this opportunity to pay a heartfelt tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for his competence, wisdom and diligence in guiding the work of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

In addition, we would like to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his tireless efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations as an instrument for the promotion of peace and solidarity among peoples.

Finally, we warmly welcome the Republic of South Africa as a new Member of the vast family of the United Nations. That country has honoured democratic ideals by abolishing the odious system of apartheid. To be sure, the arrival of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa by means of free and democratic elections deserves to be hailed from the rostrum of this Assembly.

This forum of nations gives us a timely opportunity to expound on the problem of Rwanda, which has been in the news day in and day out.

One cannot talk about the Rwanda problem without mentioning the role the United Nations has played and continues to play in the history of our country. The history of our links is well known. It will be recalled that just after the beginning of this century Rwanda was placed under the mandate system and, later, under the trusteeship system, which then led to its independence.

This history, as has been witnessed by the international community, is riddled with unfortunate events, the most recent of which is the genocide Rwanda has just experienced. This genocide, which rivals the Nazi holocaust of the 1940s, is somewhat paradoxical because since the end of the Second World War the international community has tried to build a civilization on the foundations of respect for the fundamental rights of human beings.

While the international community was pooling its efforts to put an end to racism and racial discrimination, particularly apartheid in South Africa - whose participation in the forty-ninth session is a felicitous turn of events - at the same time an ideology akin to apartheid was evolving in our country. That ideology, which was publicly professed by the public authorities - more precisely, by the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) and the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) parties of the late President Habyarimana - cleared the way for genocide. Plans for extermination were being openly prepared for a long time, with no trepidation whatsoever, since the power structure had long before institutionalized the violation of fundamental human rights. This is why armed opposition, in the form of the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), confronted the regime beginning in 1990. Some opposition parties also emerged in 1991, thanks to the pressure exerted by the RPF.

Under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity, the countries of the subregion initiated a peace process, which the United Nations, together with a number of Western countries, later joined. We take this opportunity to thank all for their tireless efforts to ensure that the Arusha negotiations would succeed.

For more than a year the Rwandese negotiated the Arusha Peace Agreement, the principal conclusions of which addressed the establishment of a State of law in Rwanda, respect for human rights, power-sharing, the establishment without discrimination of a national army, the construction of a society based on respect for democratic principles and on national reconciliation, and the return of refugees banished from their country for more than 35 years.

The international community witnessed the intransigence of the MRND-CDR regime, which, describing the Agreement as a mere scrap of paper, hatched a plan for extermination, now recognized by the whole world as genocide. The international cameras trained on this barbaric crime revealed moments of rare cruelty. The militia, trained by the MRND and the CDR and supported by the presidential guard and by other sectors of the army, slit the throats of women, elderly people, men and children. The Rwandese countryside was strewn with corpses. Our rivers swept thousands of dead bodies downstream. Churches and schools became veritable slaughterhouses, and even now they smell of human flesh, the flesh of thousands of innocent people who had hoped to find refuge there. Piled into common graves, the victims of April's madness number thousands upon thousands.

The killing in our country was intended to disintegrate the Rwandese people, and it succeeded. Now we must make a fresh start in rebuilding the Rwandese nation. We must ensure that the various sectors of the population can coexist. We must give them a common hope and a common destiny, which, after all that has happened, has become a difficult yet indispensable task.

We have already requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to help our Government in the effort to teach the Rwandese new values based on respect for fundamental human rights.

There would have been no genocide if the MRND-CDR system had abided by the spirit of Arusha. But they could not embrace the spirit of Arusha because those Rwandese Nazis were proponents of the final solution: extermination. They flouted morality, common sense, the values everyone in this Assembly believes in and, above all, the prescriptions of Arusha. Yet some who are insensitive to our suffering have asked that those Nazi parties still be allowed to hold power.

Never in history has such a scandalous privilege been sought for the organized perpetrators of similar cases of genocide. Such requests make light of our dignity as human beings. We cannot agree to these requests, which fly in the face of the spirit and the letter of the principles underlying this institution - that is, fundamental human rights.

By discouraging impulses towards revenge and in anticipation of justice that will be clear to everyone and that is supported by the international community, our Government has been able to contain a situation marked - understandably after such tragedy - by tensions and rancour. Contrary to disparaging allegations that are completely unfounded, our Government is not showing weakness; it is not just sitting on its hands whenever there is an infraction of the law.

Our Government continues to cooperate closely with the United Nations Force, and to facilitate its work. With scanty means, our Government has undertaken to rebuild a country that has been socially splintered and morally and physically ravaged. The humanitarian task of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) continues to be an indispensable asset in our efforts at rehabilitation.

This unspeakable barbarism, this genocide was carried out before the very eyes of the international community. We are grateful to those countries that generously put their troops at the disposal of UNAMIR, as well as to the African contingents of the Group of neutral military observers. We would express our sincere thanks to them for the spirit in which they made their contribution. Rather than presiding over peace and harmony among the Rwandese, the troops, misled by the authors of the apocalypse - the Rwandese authorities at the time - were, alas, forced to serve as witnesses to the carnage. We regret that their mandate prevented them from acting effectively at the moment of the tragedy. Based on this experience, we encourage the United Nations to furnish the international tribunal to be created in Rwanda with the means to function as it should, in order to spare us further disappointments and tragedies.

In accordance with Rwanda's request, and following Mr. Degnisegui's report, as well as that of the Commission of Experts established by Security Council resolution 935 (1994), of 1 July 1994, it is absolutely urgent that this international tribunal be established. It will enable us to prosecute in a completely open setting those responsible for the genocide. Since most of the criminals have found refuge in various corners of the world, what we seek is a tool of justice that knows no borders. Moreover, the very nature of the events - considered to be crimes against humanity - warrants the international community's joining forces to prevent their reoccurrence.

That is why we continue to urge the adoption of a Security Council resolution that would facilitate the arrest and trial of those responsible for the genocide who are now in refugee camps outside our borders. We would remind the Assembly that most of these camps are primarily military camps where troops and militia, still in possession of heavy and light weapons, hold hundreds of thousands of persons hostage. This resolution should be based on Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and should include a request to, an authorization for, States Members of the United Nations to detain individuals on their territory who are suspected, on solid grounds, of having participated in acts of genocide.

The construction of a new society based on social justice and respect for fundamental human rights will be possible only if those responsible for the Rwandese tragedy are prosecuted. It is now six months since the first crimes were committed, and action must be initiated. The delay in starting trials causes understandable frustration on the part of victims who are already losing hope that there can be a just society and who tend to view the relative impunity of the criminals as indicating approval of their crimes.

Another thorny problem which faces our country and upon which we would like to shed some light is that of refugees.

The Rwandese refugees can be classified into two categories: the former refugees to whom the dictatorial power had refused to grant the right to return to their homeland, and the more recent ones who fled Rwanda following the events to which I have already referred. It is our Government's policy to encourage all refugees, without distinction, to return to their country.

In this respect, we are addressing countless appeals to our citizens outside our borders to rejoin us and help us build a new Rwanda. Thousands of them have already returned to their homeland, but many others remain abroad. We are also calling upon the soldiers to come back and, if they still desire to do so - to continue their careers in the Rwandese army. For Rwanda is their country; it belongs equally, and unquestionably, to all of its daughters and all its sons, with its potential, its limitations and its history, including this most recent tragedy which we must all bear.

Our Government has made the choice to act with transparency. The unrestricted deployment of UNAMIR as well as other human rights observers should reassure the world, and especially the refugees, of our Government's determination to respect the state of law.

We urge the United Nations to contribute to eliminating all the obstacles to the return of refugees, and especially to stop the violence in the camps against, in particular, those who wish to return home, and to break the stranglehold exercised by the former army's militia and other perpetrators of genocide on the rest of the people. This is why we beseech the international community to assist us in surmounting all the challenges entailed by the return of the refugees.

Concrete steps have been taken, but much remains to be done if the world is to be completely rid of these weapons which in the past caused serious tensions in various parts of the world that degenerated into armed conflicts.

Even though the relaxation of East-West tensions has contributed greatly to the resolution of certain conflicts, particularly in Indo-China, Latin America and the Middle East, elsewhere - in the former Yugoslavia and some African countries - the fires regrettably continue to burn.

Rwanda fully supports the international community's efforts to ensure compliance with commitments related to the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Our country is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we reiterate our full dedication to the international community's goals with regard to disarmament and arms control.

The attainment of these goals - eliminating the risk of war, limiting destruction in case of war, stopping war at an early stage, strengthening international security in order to ensure economic prosperity, channelling the funds freed as a result of disarmament towards the developing countries - will allow all nations to thrive.

Although genuine progress has been made in the area of disarmament, the new world order remains compromised by the constantly growing gap between the poorer and richer countries.

In the light of the two United Nations publications on the world economic and social situation for the years 1993 and 1994, current economic trends in the world point to gloomy forecasts in the short and medium term, particularly for many third-world countries.

The Rwandese delegation hopes that this forty-ninth session will reaffirm the importance and the still current validity of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries.

We solemnly invite the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly to address the fundamental right to development, as stated in the Vienna Declaration and adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, as well as the link between peace and development. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Rwanda and Africa as a whole look to the promise of the establishment of the United Nations agenda for development and of the speedy implementation of the amendments proposed to the plan of action - amendments which will undoubtedly enable us to restore the economies of our countries.

It is imperative for the United Nations - whose main objective remains the promotion of peace, security and development - to devote itself to activities in keeping with the attainment of peace, security and development.

In the fifty years since the signing of the San Francisco Charter, the world has undergone many changes. New Powers have arisen, the geopolitical map has shifted, Africa and other third-world countries have emancipated themselves, the cold war has ended - hence we must reassess our Organization to ensure that it can meet the new challenges.

It is in this context that Rwanda is concerned with the demands of the new world geopolitical situation, as well as with the new role assigned to the United Nations to contribute to the advent of the new world order.

In this connection, particular attention must be paid to the current restructuring of the United Nations system, particularly of the Security Council.

With regard to this very important organ of the United Nations system, the Rwandese delegation considers that membership, both permanent and non-permanent, should be expanded, with scrupulous attention to equitable geographic representation and bearing in mind the desire to maintain efficiency.

Similarly, the current restructuring of the United Nations system should allow small States to enjoy greater security and to be able to occupy a seat on the Security Council without difficulty.

One hopes that the new configuration of the Security Council will reflect the principle of equality among all Member States, and that this reform will respect the rules of democracy and transparency.

(spoke in English)

May I conclude by stating before the community of nations that members represent that the task we have set ourselves is enormous, but the will and determination of the Rwandese people to build a new society is unflinching.

To all those Rwandese who became victims of the machine of genocide and recent massacres, we share your deep wounds and reiterate our determination to bring the culprits to justice. To those Rwandese who were blindly manipulated to join the bankrupt politics of division and suppression, we call upon you to come back to your senses and join us in building a new society based on tolerance and reconciliation.

To the international community, I pledge our resolve to ensure that never again shall Rwanda be a terrain on which is sown politics of denial of basic human rights to any of its citizens. Its role in helping us to pick up the pieces of the completely shattered fabric of our society need not be emphasized. We share this moral duty, it being understood that the major part of the burden by far rests on the Rwandese people themselves.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Rwandese Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Rwandese Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar, His Excellency Mr. Jacques Sylla, on whom I now call.

Mr. Sylla (Madagascar) *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the delegation of Madagascar, may I congratulate you most sincerely, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. You assumption of this important post brings pride and hope to Africa, which sees this session as a special opportunity for drawing the international community's attention to the economic and social problems it has been facing in recent years.

My delegation assures you of its full cooperation and support, which we also offer to the other members of the Bureau. To them also I address my congratulations. I also wish to pay tribute to your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, who so ably and in so masterly a fashion presided over the Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

In this new era in international relations the world faces two contradictory situations: one, unforgettable pictures of national reconciliation and faith in the future, the other, a vision of the horror of peoples and nations ripping each other apart, even to the extent of annihilating one another. The international community keeps on swinging back and forth between pride and dejection and between great hope and deep despair.

The actual progress made in ways of handling and settling certain disputes nevertheless strengthens our belief in the principles and covenants set forth in the Charter of our Organization. For example, we welcome the encouraging developments in Mozambique, which is now about to hold its first multiparty elections. Similarly, the negotiations in Lusaka between the Angolan Government and UNITA are beginning to bear fruit. Moreover, the clear efforts by those involved to smooth out the difficulties of applying the settlement plan in Western Sahara give us grounds for some optimism about the outcome of that dispute.

My delegation would also encourage those who are involved in the nuclear problem in the Korean peninsula to continue their talks with a view to arriving at a negotiated solution, which would help to promote stability and peace in the region.

With the same end in mind, Madagascar hopes there will be a peaceful settlement, on the basis of Security Council resolutions, of the problems between Kuwait and Iraq, with a view to establishing a mutually beneficial atmosphere of security and cooperation in the region.

The much-acclaimed return of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa to the community of nations is one of the major events of the last decade of this century and a subject of enormous pride for us all. Madagascar welcomes the establishment of a non-racial regime in that great country and firmly believes that reorganizing South Africa on a democratic basis opens up new prospects for cooperation and development throughout the region.

Thanks to the political courage of the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders, the Middle East has now begun a process of historic reconciliation that seemed impossible just a short time ago. The Malagasy Government is following closely the ups and downs of the implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Gaza and Jericho signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Agreement between Israel and Jordan on the Common Agenda. The United Nations should encourage all the parties to use the relevant resolutions with a view to establishing a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East region.

With the disappearance of a world balance based on fear of a nuclear holocaust there came hope for a world free from the scourge of war and favourable to the strengthening of international cooperation. Unfortunately, recent events in the international arena show that the new international order is indeed precarious.

Today we are seeing a reappearance of armed conflict in almost all parts of the world. Several countries are now plunged in fratricidal wars resulting in human tragedy and political chaos. Underlying these tragedies we see, inter alia, intolerance, xenophobia, the problem of minorities and, above all, the absence of democratic practices in the settlement of disputes. Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are tragic and dangerous situations which threaten not only the equilibrium of their regions but also international peace and security.

Other situations which are too often ignored could degenerate into serious crises. The problem of borders in central and eastern Europe, the disturbing situation in the Indian subcontinent and the flow of refugees in Africa, Asia and even in Europe are all situations that show how fragile international security is.

The efforts on the part of the United Nations to resolve regional and subregional disputes must be supported by greater world-wide cooperation in disarmament. In this connection my delegation attaches high priority to continuing initiatives and concerted actions by Member States to put a stop to the uncontrolled movement of arms and to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation hopes that the consensus at the last session on multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty will lead to the conclusion of a universal treaty so as to improve the prospects for the 1995 Conference of parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Broadening the activities of the United Nations in regard to peace-keeping and in regard to full achievement of the development goals calls for greater effectiveness in the United Nations machinery if the Organization is to live up to the expectations of the international community.

As for the role of the United Nations in the maintenance and restoration of peace, recent experience clearly shows the need for reform with a view to strengthening the United Nations capacity to prevent breaches of the peace on the one hand, and on the other hand to carry out peace-keeping operations on the ground.

Lessons can be learned from the difficulties encountered in Somalia, the tragedy of Rwanda, and the sorry experience of the former Yugoslavia. Those United Nations missions that were to some extent successful benefitted from the following factors: broad support from the international community; the consent of the parties to the dispute; and non-violent and impartial intervention forces. A peace-keeping operation *per se* should be accompanied by diplomatic efforts and economic and social assistance and should also tackle the underlying causes of the conflict. In any event, preventive diplomacy is the best means of averting the eruption of potential conflicts.

The use of regional machinery for the settlement of disputes would improve the conduct of peace-keeping operations and would, for example, avoid delay in mobilizing humanitarian assistance. After all, who is better placed than the States of a region to react to a potential threat there, particularly if the region already has an adequate structure for the prevention of conflicts? Examples of this are the system of collective security in Europe and the mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of disputes in Africa. Yet this Organization should not just unload its problems on to regional mechanisms; rather, it should offer those mechanisms the necessary support by providing a clear and precise mandate and by making adequate financial and logistic resources available.

Never before have circumstances been so favourable for realizing the aspiration of the majority of Members of this Organization to an enlarged Security Council that provides equitable representation. Many proposals concerning this topic are now being discussed by the General Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group.

Madagascar, which, as is demonstrated by its Constitution, is deeply committed to democratic principles, believes that the democracy that is advocated in many countries should apply in the international system too. Madagascar is open to any proposal that would not damage the effectiveness of the Security Council. At the same time, we emphasize the need for democratic representation reflecting contemporary realities.

The Government of Madagascar does not underestimate the special responsibility of States that are permanent members of the Security Council, especially in the area of contributions to peace-keeping operations. However, any reform that is undertaken should win the support of all Member States so that they will have the necessary trust in it and be able to participate effectively and on an equal footing.

The same principles apply to development problems, in that political stability at the national, regional and international levels determines whether development objectives can be met. There can be no peace without development, as can be seen in various parts of the world where serious conflicts and political troubles have been caused by economic hardship. Against this backdrop, the imperative of the universality of peace and development forcefully tells us to take note of how the world economic situation is developing.

The crisis that has affected the world economy for more than a decade is worsening, despite a slow and fragile recovery in some developed countries. This crisis continues to make a negative impact on the development process in third-world countries: erratic fluctuations in rates of exchange, an increase in interest rates and an unprecedented deterioration in the terms of trade - to mention only the most notable effects of the past year.

The gap between North and South grows wider while the inequalities between the regions become increasingly striking. Poverty and extreme poverty are daily being ingrained in the countries that are now referred to as the fourth world. The situation in Africa has become alarming. The crisis there is magnified by the negative effects of natural disasters and civil and ethnic wars.

Problems such as the crushing weight of external debt, stagnation, if not a reduction, in official development assistance, financial and trade restraints and a continuing drop in commodity prices are - today as yesterday - symptoms of a crisis in development.

Alongside this crisis, a serious change is taking place at the cost of developing countries, particularly poor countries. In the present restructuring of the world economy the interdependence that is preached has contradictory effects. While the countries of the North enjoy protectionism in all its forms in their markets, liberalism is becoming a requirement for developing countries. Equally, there is talk of the interdependence of problems but sectoral approaches alone are still used.

Economies in the industrialized countries are becoming increasingly integrated, while we note increasing marginalization of the economies of the poor countries. While the industrialized countries increase their independence in raw materials through the development of micro-electronics, the developing countries are suffering the backlash, and their already-fragile economic position is being weakened further. These are new challenges that we have to take up in the international arena.

Faced with these paradoxes and contradictions, which keep us deadlocked, and with economic stagnation in third-world countries, we have to ask how we can get out of this situation. It is clear that only by combining our efforts at all levels - national, regional and international - shall we be able to produce a lasting solution.

As to the national level, I should like to cite the case of my own country. The Government of Madagascar has made development the principal objective underlying its activities at the national and international levels. Thus diplomacy is put at the service of development and, without any ideological considerations, is focused on the establishment of relations with all States on the basis of respect for the great fundamental principles set forth in the various international legal instruments.

While continuing to implement its structural-adjustment programme, Madagascar has made important political changes in the shape of democratization, characterized by the blossoming of a multi-party approach and the creation of the conditions necessary to the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In short, we are working towards the advent of a state of law that responds to the deeply felt aspirations of our people.

This democratization of our political life is accompanied by economic reform based on liberalism designed to promote active participation by our people in the development of the country. In this context, our Government is trying to create a climate of trust in our institutional framework, and we are trying to draw up clear rules for production and investment in order to guarantee the necessary political support at the national and international levels.

The Government of Madagascar would like to thank the friendly countries and international institutions that have understood the importance of the changes now under way and that intend to support them and to increase their contributions to satisfy our most immediate and urgent needs and, in the long term, help to strengthen our democratic process and promote real, self-sustaining development.

When we use the term "immediate needs", we are thinking of a set of relief mechanisms designed to deal with the precarious situation of our principal social sectors because of the demands of the structural adjustment programme.

As for the economic recovery and development programme, I should like to repeat that the Government of the Republic of Madagascar is prepared to conclude agreements with the Bretton Woods institutions. It is our ardent hope that, above and beyond their current demands for adjustments to achieve financial equilibrium and balanced budgets, those institutions will take new measures to reorient that programme towards true recovery accompanied by an economic take-off and sustainable development.

At the regional level, developing countries have come up with guidelines and goals and have now buckled down to implementing them. In the case of Africa, I would recall the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act, the African Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Four years after the launching of the new Programme of Action, we have to say that the expected results have not yet been achieved and that Africa, one of the world's least-developed continents, has not received the hoped for assistance and aid from the rich countries. Because of their own efforts to implement measures for rehabilitation and recovery, often involving considerable sacrifices, the African countries deserve a more positive response from the international community.

It is crucial to settle problems of debt, commodity diversification and the provision of adequate financial resources if African States are to be assured not only the conditions required for true economic and social take-off, but also the success of the structural and political reforms now under way, free from social upheaval and the danger of a decline in security and stability.

The United Nations has an important role to play in finding appropriate solutions to development problems. The persistent nature of the problems we customarily evoke here in the Assembly every year shows once again the inadequacy of the policies and measures adopted so far - despite the adoption of several international instruments for cooperation, such as the Declaration of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the Cartegena Commitment of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VIII), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21.

The problems we are facing can no longer be dealt with adequately on an ad hoc basis or constantly subjected to adjustment measures. What is required is structural reform of the international economic system, which, despite profound changes, is still unjust and perpetuates relations of dependency. In other words, it is very important to define new strategies and agree on new parameters and mechanisms that can reverse the inequities in international economic relations today.

This is a task for the United Nations, which, because of its universality and its democratic principles, remains the only forum that can tackle these problems with an integrated approach, taking into account the political implications of decisions made by those principally involved in development, including financial, monetary and international trade institutions.

The Agenda for Development, the indispensable corollary to the Agenda for Peace, launched two years ago by the Secretary-General, should give the international community new guidelines as it seeks to attain development objectives The elaboration of that Agenda should be given special attention.

The Agenda's first objectives should be to eliminate poverty, meet peoples' basic needs and improve their standard of living. It should seek to promote effective implementation of existing commitments and agreements and take into account the goals of forthcoming international conferences in the field of economic and social development. Instead of talking about requirements or conditions, it should set forth practical and realistic ways of meeting the challenges with which we are faced.

In this connection, the attention of the international community should be focused on questions of debt, development financing, commodities, international trade, environment and development.

Support for economic and technical cooperation between developing countries and the strengthening of regional and sub-regional integration initiatives should be an integral part of the new Agenda.

Experience has shown that the resumption of development through renewed international cooperation cannot succeed without the political will of States, especially the rich ones. Although such cooperation depends on many variables, and is affected by many different circumstances, it can no longer disregard the principles of justice, equity and equal but differentiated participation.

At this crucial moment in its history, the Organization must learn from the past so that it can consolidate its achievements, meet today's challenges and develop a plan for the future of the United Nations.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations will be the time for drawing up a balance sheet, for making the Organization, the Member States and the people of the world face up to their respective responsibilities. This historic moment will make clear the gap between hopes and reality, between commitments fulfilled and promises forgotten.

Efforts to restructure the Organization and give it a second wind will be successful only if there is a true resolve to arrive at a world consensus for development, in all its aspects, as the foundation of peace and a source of hope for all mankind.

For its part, Madagascar is prepared to work with peace-loving and justice-loving States to build a better world.

Address by Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.

Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia. I invite him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Drnovsek (Slovenia): Please allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and Côte d'Ivoire on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Our deliberations under your presidency are certain to be a success. May I also take this occasion to thank His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Guyana, for his many contributions as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

The economic and political changes currently under way have raised the hopes of all of us for a better future. Democracy has been restored to much of the world, thus not only showing that it is the most suitable model of government, but also making possible a greater degree of international cooperation, strengthening the rule of international law and giving the United Nations a more powerful role.

In Eastern Europe, the process of democratic change is now irreversible. Though much is made of the dangers of new ethnic conflicts and the rise of new ultra-nationalistic and totalitarian forces, they become ever less likely to succeed with each day that passes. Have we not seen two of the most apparently intractable problems - the Middle East and South Africa - brought to a peaceful conclusion? The Middle East was a crucible of conflict; apartheid in South Africa was a disgrace to the entire human race. Mr. de Klerk and Mr. Mandela showed both political wisdom and human tolerance in agreeing on a transition for the Republic of South Africa. South Africa will play a major role in future developments in the African continent.

Those are just some causes for optimism. But optimism does not mean expecting that all our crises will simply resolve themselves without any action on our part. If our collective hopes and desires are to lead anywhere, then the work must begin here at the United Nations, where representatives from the entire world are gathered. The time has come when we can make this world a better place to live.

Never in the history of the world has the awareness of the global nature of the basic issues been as strong as it is today. Never has the desire for cooperation between nations so clearly superseded the wish for the domination of one nation by another. And never has man had so much knowledge and technology at his fingertips as he has today. All of these factors are predispositions for a greater role for the United Nations, and we must do everything to ensure that the mechanisms of the United Nations work more effectively.

We support the efforts for the reconstruction of the Security Council. The Security Council ought to enhance both its effectiveness and its efficiency, as well as its representational capacity. A measured, realistic expansion of the composition of the Council would be appropriate. Furthermore, Slovenia supports the proposal that Germany and Japan become permanent members of the Council.

An additional task in this regard relates to the need to enhance the transparency of the work of the Security Council. The system of consultations should be developed further, so as to provide an adequate opportunity for the participation of United Nations Member States interested in various situations dealt with by the Security Council.

The General Assembly could also make a greater contribution to the development of adequate approaches on the part of the Security Council, as well as to less costly and more effective methods of preventive diplomacy, and at the same time decrease the need for the Security Council to intervene in armed conflicts.

Furthermore, in recent years the General Assembly has taken an important step in this direction through the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Last, but not least, it is important to do as much as possible to strengthen the United Nations financially, even though the finance ministers in each and every Member country find that their contributions to the United Nations are a significant component of their State budget. Slovenia is committed to the principle that contributions to the United Nations must be paid in full and on time. The regular payment of contributions is an essential part of all efforts aimed at the financial reform of the United Nations.

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the recent Conference on Population and Development have brought this Organization into the public consciousness in a new way; they have shown that we are conscious of some of the most fundamental problems that face all of us, not just Governments, but the people. Though some may be sceptical about the results of these Conferences, my feeling is that they have contributed significantly towards a global consensus and have involved a whole new constituency in our work.

The maintenance of international peace and security is enshrined in the United Nations Charter as the main purpose of the Organization. I believe that one of the most important questions to be dealt with is dealing with the provision of armed forces acting within the framework of United Nations operations. The variety and complexity of United Nations military and related activities have developed far beyond what was once defined as "peace-keeping". Careful reflection is needed on future directions to be taken. Slovenia welcomes the Secretary-General's current efforts to develop a system of stand-by forces and is ready to participate in these efforts.

The maintenance of international peace and security must be strengthened by effective measures in the field of disarmament. Slovenia is, like most other States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, convinced of the need for indefinite extension of that Treaty. Furthermore we are convinced of the need for enhanced security guarantees, in particular negative security guarantees. We also support the efforts to achieve a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing and other disarmament measures with respect to weapons of mass destruction. With respect to conventional weapons, we support the United States initiative for the conclusion of an agreement to reduce the number and availability of anti-personnel land-mines. In short, the issues of disarmament ought to remain high among the priorities of the United Nations agenda.

The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is another of the highest priorities of the United Nations. For the Republic of Slovenia, it represents both a basic domestic task and a strong international commitment. Slovenia actively participated in the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, and in the subsequent efforts leading to the appointment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. By the same token, we support the efforts for further development of the United Nations system in the field of human rights. We are ready to contribute to the work of the Working Group of the Third Committee in its search for the appropriate methods of protection of human rights. Here again we believe that prevention is better than cure, and that appropriate international action is necessary in order to prevent situations characterized by violations of human rights.

The United Nations is confronted with a variety of situations involving the use of force. The armed conflicts in the Balkans are among the most difficult situations. Slovenia is the only successor State of the now-disintegrated former Yugoslavia which is not directly threatened by the ongoing conflict in that region. None the less, Slovenia remains vitally interested in the stability of the Balkans. The horrors of war against ordinary citizens, mass violations of human rights and breaches of the United Nations Charter, first in the Republic of Croatia and now in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, cause serious concern to the entire international community.

I will not be telling Members anything new when I say that the international community was not prepared for the eruption of the crisis that occurred within the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, the conflict that was subsequently to occur within Bosnia and Herzegovina has seriously damaged the image and credibility of the United Nations. It is true that without the involvement of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), working in conjunction with many humanitarian organizations, the tragedy in Bosnia would have been even worse. But humanitarian assistance alone cannot be considered as a substitute for effective policy.

Such achievements as the Washington Agreement, concluded between the Bosnian Muslims and Croats, do at least raise some hope that appropriate international assistance can meaningfully influence the political aspects of the conflict. Nevertheless, the continuation of the militant behaviour by the Bosnian Serbs maintains the need for the option of lifting of the arms embargo against the legitimate Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to remain on the agenda. This war, with all its consequences, is threatening to continue into a third winter, and I am afraid that this certainly most risky and negative of options will be the only one left if the international community does not prove able to bring about an end to hostilities and open the way towards a viable peace with the necessary elements of justice.

I would like to end this sad chapter of my address with a warning. We should by no means forget that the terrifying pattern of "ethnic cleansing" has been patented in the conflicts that have occurred across the territories of several successor States of the former Yugoslavia. Regardless of the final outcome of these conflicts in the Balkans, we must seriously consider all the means and methods at our disposal that may prevent a repetition of this pattern of events occurring in other parts of the world.

I speak for a country which has the good fortune not to be a problem, but a country which seeks solutions. In the less than two years in which our independence was internationally recognized, we have, under difficult circumstances, achieved positive economic growth. We have managed to maintain a high level of social security and stability. The transformation and reform of our economy has gone hand-in-hand with the rapid growth of our democratic institutions. We are paying special attention to the protection of human rights and of our ethnic minorities. Slovenia is a member of the Council of Europe; we have signed the Partnership for Peace and the Pact of Stability; Slovenia is a factor of stability in Europe and strives to be an active part of Europe's integration.

I do not wish to imply that there are no obstacles to the progress of that integration. Europe may have high levels of prosperity and deeply rooted democracies and it may be one of the most stable regions in the world, but the ghosts of the past and leanings towards near-forgotten forms of nationalistic chauvinism are still with us. These are in direct contradiction to the very idea of a cooperative and multicultural Europe; they endanger the processes of integration. Unexplained and unjustifiable impediments have already been raised against Slovenia's association with the European Union.

In closing, allow me to express Slovenia's great satisfaction that our proposal that the moral and ethical aspects of social developments be considered at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen next year has been widely accepted. We are particularly glad that Slovenia will have the honour to host the United Nations seminar on the ethical and spiritual dimensions of social progress and development, an event to which we attach great importance. If one thing is certain, it is that economic, scientific and technological views on development do not exist in a vacuum. The United Nations Charter calls for the fostering of the prosperity, harmony and freedom of people both as individuals and as cultural entities. This ultimate objective should be borne in mind in all the United Nations endeavours.

It is my hope that under your leadership, the Assembly will take positive steps in that direction.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, His Excellency Mr. Jaime Marchan.

Mr. Marchán (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I would like to congratulate Mr Amara Essy, Foreign Minister of Côte d'Ivoire on his election as President of this important Assembly.

I should also like to extend to Ambassador Samuel Insanally the congratulations of Ecuador on his brilliant performance during the last session.

Equally, on behalf of the Government of Ecuador, I should like to extend our congratulations to the Secretary General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his work in carrying out his important duties.

During these last few years, the world of international relations has undergone a swift and profound transformation. Several problems which divided nations have disappeared, while others have emerged, as have forces and elements whose existence invites careful reflection. The most serious ideological differences have been overcome and we have witnessed with satisfaction the holding of free elections in South Africa; however, in other parts of the world, other evils have reappeared - racism, xenophobia, civil wars - and problems such as hunger and poverty have become more acute. Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Rwanda are just some of the names which now move mankind's moral conscience.

At the same time, the historic role of the United Nations has acquired a unique and far-reaching meaning, and the near future of the planet appears linked to the directives and decisions adopted in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

The fact that the United Nations is about to celebrate 50 years of existence is truly pleasing, because it means that this forum of mankind has consolidated its leading role in history. At the same time, this anniversary leads us to reflect on ways to improve the Organization. This process will inevitably involve reconsidering some United Nations structures in order to adapt them to the new demands of development which will be discussed at the social summit soon to take place in Copenhagen. The social summit must enable nations, taking account of the many decades during which trade and financial matters have played against less developed countries, to commit themselves to more direct action to face the problems of inadequate education, illness, violence and poverty.

The United Nations is approaching its fiftieth year at a time when building a new international order has become imperative. Ecuador wants this new international order to be marked by unconditional respect for the principles of the Organization's Charter, by the international economic restructuring which for many years has been one of the main aspirations of the developing world, and by effective and continuing solidarity and interdependence among all the nations on our planet.

The changes on the international scene have brought about a new and growing interest in the United Nations. The international community turns to the Organization more often and with more confidence when it needs help in solving its problems. The Organization's structures must be revised and strengthened so that its responses can meet the needs that have been put to it.

To carry out this endeavour, it will be necessary to address statements that have been made regarding the new composition of the Security Council and to consider the need to revitalize the General Assembly, giving it functions and responsibilities in keeping with its status as the highest forum of the Organization. An international order based on and designed for the human person must have at its disposal an adequate tool for carrying out programmes needed for the economic and social development of our peoples. From that point of view, it is imperative for us to undertake a process of strengthening the Economic and Social Council. Furthermore, we have to create conditions that will provide the indispensable motivation for States, given the new circumstance of the world, to place their full trust in the International Court of Justice.

Ecuador, a country that has the deepest respect for fundamental human rights, appreciates and assumes with the utmost responsibility the trust of the international community, granted through this Organization, enabling it to contribute to the work of the most important forums devoted to the promotion and protection of all human rights.

The Government of Ecuador echoes the expressions of support to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It trusts that his difficult task will be based on the frank understanding of the international community. It also expresses its conviction that the Assembly will commit the necessary administrative and financial resources to facilitate the duties of the High Commissioner.

Human rights and social development are inseparable, indivisible. In daily reality we cannot separate respect for human rights from fair economic relations. As stated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), quality of life is a subject which cannot remain at the entire mercy of the game of macroeconomic statistics.

We developing countries are affected in our foreign trade by the gradual deterioration of the terms of exchange, a phenomenon which generates serious social consequences and which forces us to export greater volumes of raw, finished and semi-manufactured goods. We also face non-tariff barriers, and many other measures that block access by our products - such as bananas and flowers in the case of Ecuador - to the markets of those very developed countries where the principle of free trade is designed and developed. This protectionist policy contradicts the goals of general welfare sought by the international community.

The countries of Latin America, including Ecuador, have launched a great effort of adjustment and economic restructuring which must be properly understood and which offers a framework more conducive to international cooperation and to foreign investment.

At this stage of history, neither the developed nor the developing countries can neglect the so-called social question, a product of the socio-economic inequities that dominate the world. The solution to this problem can be achieved only by international cooperation at all levels. The development of poor nations must depend on their own efforts, on cooperation based on smooth, effective and profoundly human mechanisms of integration.

We believe in the fundamental right to life. Therefore, we cannot and will not accept the implementation of programmes conditioned on population control and abortion, which are what Pope John Paul II has called "the culture of death". These are the bases that should inspire solidarity and international cooperation.

Environmental problems, and those linked to the dangerous use of nuclear weapons, have shown that we humans are all voyaging in the same boat and that our destinies are intertwined. Thus, the prosperity of some cannot result from the exploitation or damage of the environment of others; the accumulation of weapons in one country is nothing but a boomerang that country is throwing at itself.

I want to recall the words of the Constitutional President of Ecuador, Mr. Sixto Durán Ballén, in this august forum, when he said:

> "I must emphasize that although the developed countries, which are mainly responsible for the deterioration of the environment, have a particular obligation, it is other countries that are being asked to make the sacrifice of restricting the exercise of their legitimate right to use the wealth that nature has given them. It is necessary to seek due compensation jointly, especially in the shape of financial aid and technological cooperation". *(A/47/PV.12, p. 18)*

Inevitably, all our peoples must join forces to safeguard and restore the environment. In the ecological field, we have completed the stage of formulating rules and international conventions. Now we must join our resources and technical efforts to put those solutions into practice as soon as possible. That is why it is important to develop greater linkage between institutions such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the one hand, and programmes of the United Nations and the Global Environment Facility on the other. Therefore, genuine transfer of clean technologies is of great importance.

It is especially worrisome that nuclear testing for military purposes continues to be carried out. Ecuador condemns these tests, which damage the environment, endanger the countries of the test area and ignore the right of all the peoples to peace and security. Furthermore, Ecuador is worried by the fact that in the post-cold-war era some countries have attracted significant numbers of technicians and nuclear scientists in order to develop their military power. Resolution 48/70, approved last December, opens the way towards a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, which all States should support.

We believe in the need not only to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but also to improve it and establish it forever. At the same time, we support the declaration of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, similar to those established by the Latin American Treaty.

In this regard, it is a matter of serious concern that, while we are trying to limit and even eliminate nuclear arsenals, there has been an increase in the manufacture of conventional weapons and in the traffic in them. Accordingly, there is an imperative need, as the Holy See proposed through its Council for Justice and Peace, for the creation of an international authority to reduce the trade in weapons and to achieve the goal of a comprehensive ban on all kinds of weapons.

Ecuador welcomes most warmly the agreements arrived at and the progress made in the Middle East in the process of establishing peace and normalizing the relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Ecuador firmly supports this process, which is an example for the solution of other, perhaps less complex, problems. We also condemn the actions of extremist groups who, through terrorism, attempt to prevent the consolidation of peace in that important part of the world.

We were particularly enthusiastic over the reinstatement of South Africa in this world Organization. With the victory over apartheid one of the United Nations longest and most difficult struggles has now come to an end.

We must however reiterate our profound concern over the ongoing ethnic and religious clashes in the territories of the former Yugoslavia. Ecuador supports the actions taken by the international community in seeking a political solution that would ensure an end to the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

And now my country would like to issue a plea to the international community to provide generous humanitarian assistance for the victims in Rwanda.

Recently, there has been a proliferation of United Nations peace-keeping operations. Notwithstanding all its shortcomings, the international effort in this regard is praiseworthy, but we believe this Organization should, basically, use preventive measures to deal with the underlying causes of civil, international and inter-ethnic conflicts, and along with this, it should also address the problems of injustice, inequality in economic and trade relations, and the persistence of prejudice and age-old enmity. The road to peace lies through programmes to provide help in practical and urgent terms, to those countries most affected by hunger and extreme poverty. There must be a prompt review of programmes of cooperation. There must be a more fruitful effort on the part of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to develop a true culture of peace and respect for the rights of others.

The fundamental obligation of the United Nations - one might even say its real raison d'être - is not only the maintenance of international peace and security but also the raising of the economic, social and cultural standards of peoples. This is the only solid basis for progress and development.

I believe it is time for this Assembly to adopt pragmatic resolutions so that we may spend less on paper and bureaucracy and more on technical and cultural missions and specific programmes that would reach those people that face the greatest problems, areas afflicted by war, plague and starvation.

Ecuador has advocated a solution to the complex Haitian crisis that takes account of the principles of non-intervention and the peaceful settlement of disputes and that involves the participation of all sectors of Haitian society, with the broadest respect for human rights and taking account of the relevant resolutions of the Organization of American States and of the United Nations.

Ecuador trusts that democracy will be established permanently and as soon as possible in Haiti. To that end, it is offering all the diplomatic and political support that it can. At the same time, we would wish to participate in the humanitarian efforts to contribute to the rebuilding of the Haitian economy, once constitutional order is restored.

Ecuador would also be in favour of continuing the Cuban-American dialogue in that same constructive spirit and with good will. We fervently hope that our sister nation of Cuba may be able to become fully involved again in hemispheric cooperation. It will be necessary to make great strides along the road to broadening and strengthening democracy and pluralism, and at the same time an end must be put to the unilateral blockade to which Cuba has been subjected for many years.

In keeping with our constant desire to contribute to a climate of peace, understanding and cooperation among peoples, Ecuador has been seeking some means of dealing with its age-old controversy with Peru and strengthening its ties of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Ecuador and Peru. As we said earlier, Ecuador attaches very special importance, within this process, to the intervention of His Holiness the Pope, in seeking a definitive solution to this problem. This is in view of the high moral authority of His Holiness, which is recognized by both our peoples.

It is increasingly clear to our two nations that the way to development is to be found in working together in harmony.

We wish to deepen and broaden our far-reaching common interests. This is to the mutual benefit of our two countries and would enable us to become efficient partners as we develop together.

All the nations represented in this Assembly are called upon to build a better world, a world free from the horrors of war, hunger and environmental destruction. May we, through our work, respond to this historic challenge.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia, His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab.

Mr. Gurirab *(Namibia):* On behalf of the Namibian delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. As a distinguished diplomat and public servant with long experience, you bring to your office an outstanding record of wisdom, excellence and industry. Côte d'Ivoire and Namibia have maintained close relations of friendship and cooperation. On a personal note, I take great pride in your brilliant election and extend best wishes to you.

During his term of office, your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, introduced practical steps aimed at enhancing the work of the General Assembly and promoting further our common endeavours towards peace, partnership, development and prosperity. We commend him for all this.

Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our illustrious Secretary-General, has always kept his plate full in the service of our Organization and its Charter. He has also, on a continuous basis, kept intensifying his tireless efforts in furtherance of world peace and security and, not least, development and regional conflict management and resolution. The Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Development" is an important and timely complement to "An Agenda for Peace". Together they reinforce General Assembly resolution 48/165 on the "Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership". I can assure the Secretary-General that he can count on Namibia's support in the discharge of his mandate.

Following our independence, the Government and the people of Namibia strongly felt that the decolonization of our country was not complete because parts of our national territory still remained under colonial occupation. In 1991, from this rostrum, I called on the international community and, particularly, the permanent members of the Security Council to live up to their commitment, collectively and severally, by ensuring the early reintegration of Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands into Namibia, in accordance with Security Council resolution 432 (1978). Since then, I have kept the international community abreast of the negotiations to this end between the Governments of Namibia and South Africa. In 1992, I reported on the establishment of the Joint Administrative Authority, and last year I announced the agreed date for the reintegration.

It is with pride and satisfaction that I am now finally informing the General Assembly and the world community as a whole that, on 1 March 1994, Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands were reintegrated into Namibia. Security Council Resolution 432 (1978) has thus been fully implemented. On that emotional but indeed solemn occasion marking the second independence of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia, proudly declared that at last Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands were forever liberated and reintegrated into Namibia and he thanked the people of South Africa for their role in making this possible. A huge and tumultuous crowd of Namibians and friends from abroad who were gathered there confirmed this truth with their loud cheers. In the end, diplomacy has triumphed over confrontation.

I would like to place on record Namibia's gratitude to the Secretary-General, as well as the Secretaries-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Commonwealth, the member States of the South African Development Community (SADC) and the front-line States, as well as many other good friends who rendered support and encouragement to Namibia in the negotiating process.

At this point let me reiterate what I said then, that a successful resolution of this issue will not only consolidate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country but will also create enormous opportunity for economic integration, community-building and prosperity for the SADC region. New vistas for trade, transport and communication would be opened up throughout southern Africa. And this will further stimulate free movement of goods, services and people in the area. Walvis Bay will greatly complement other ports in the region.

It is a truism that peace, democracy, political stability and good governance are among the basic pillars for development. The southern African region presents a good example of transformation from war, conflicts, economic destabilization, political instability, social disintegration, suppression and denial of human rights to the new situation of peace, democracy, stability, regional cooperation and hope for a more prosperous future for us all. The former Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) vigorously sought to counteract the destabilization and subversion of the countries of the region by the apartheid regime of South Africa. The front-line States, with vigour and determination, also pursued the fight for liberation, peace, political stability, democratization and promotion and protection of human rights. Now, with the eradication of apartheid in South Africa and the installation of the first democratically elected Government, the struggle for freedom and political emancipation in southern Africa was crowned with a gigantic victory.

The people of South Africa finally triumphed over the apartheid system. The epoch making inauguration of President Nelson Mandela, on 10 May 1994, was a victory for humanity and a vindication of the untold sacrifices of the South African people. The international community, and in particular the countries and the peoples of southern Africa, celebrated this joyous event, confident in the conviction that peace had finally come to our region. We in Namibia are particularly gratified to welcome the new South Africa into the fold of the community of nations. Just as we struggled together during the apartheid era, we look forward to strengthened partnership for development and prosperity for our people and the region.

The time for reconstruction and economic cooperation in the region has finally dawned. We are convinced that the transformation in 1992 of the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) will further consolidate regional economic cooperation and all-round development for the prosperity of all our people.

This will indeed serve as a formidable building-block towards the realization of the goals of the African Economic Community, especially in the field of inter-Africa trade, investment, capacity-building and human resource development. In this context, Namibia welcomes with appreciation President Clinton's announcement yesterday in Washington that the United States Government will make a substantial financial contribution to reconstruction and development in South Africa, as well as in other countries in the region. It is good news for us that a friend of Africa, Ambassador Andrew Young, will coordinate this programme.

Let me mention here the recent first-ever meeting between Foreign Ministers of the European Union and SADC held last month in Berlin. The meeting was historic and elevated the interaction and cooperative relations between the two regions to a higher political and economic level.

The past four years have seen throughout Africa a process of free and fair elections, multi-party democracy, the protection of human rights, press freedom, the rule of law, and market-oriented economies. This process has taken a firm direction and produced positive results in southern Africa and in other parts of Africa. In 1989, successful independence elections were held which culminated in a free and independent Namibia in 1990. In 1991, democratic elections were held in Zambia; in 1992 free and fair elections were held in Angola, though regrettably UNITA refused to accept the results and restarted the fighting; Lesotho held multi-party democratic elections in 1993; and this year, South Africa and Malawi underwent democratic transformations. In October, Botswana and Mozambique will hold democratic elections. Multi-party democratic, presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled in Namibia in December this year. Likewise, 1995 will see multi-party democratic elections in Tanzania and general elections in Zimbabwe. This would mean that the vision for deepening democratization, peace, prosperity and true partnership in SADC will be greatly boosted.

In the emerging world order resulting from the end of the cold war and the victories scored by the forces of liberation, the front-line States decided that the time had come to transform themselves into a mechanism for political consultations, conflict resolution, peace and security in the SADC region. The new body which is now being put together is intended to augment the Organization of African Unity (OAU) mechanism for conflict resolution and peace-keeping, and will serve primarily as the political and security arm of SADC itself. The countries of SADC, through this mechanism, are committed to defend and protect constitutional order and the rule of law. Through their common vision for peace and development, a task force of three Heads of State recently succeeded in peacefully redressing the attempted overthrow of the democratically elected Government of Lesotho. It was a first major test, and the SADC leaders rose to the occasion and defused what was potentially an explosive situation with serious consequences for the whole region.

Africa needs to produce similar success stories, through concerted regional initiatives, in other conflict situations such as Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan and others. Naturally, we welcome the serious efforts which are being made by neighbouring African States in and relating to each one of these trouble spots. To this end, Africa and the international community alike should heed the appeals for contributions to the OAU Peace Fund. In Namibia, we believe that once given adequate financial and human resources Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the OAU Secretary-General, and his staff are capable of implementing expeditiously the relevant decisions of the succeeding summits of African leaders.

In Angola, it is our strong expectation that the protracted negotiations currently under way in Lusaka appear poised for an imminent and successful conclusion. The Government and the people of Namibia are indeed awaiting the successful resolution of this bloody conflict. In their own modest way, the Government and the people of Namibia will continue to play a constructive role to hasten this process. The statement made last week from this rostrum by the Foreign Minister of Angola demonstrated once again the flexibility and genuine goodwill of the Angolan Government to reach a peaceful settlement in the interest of the suffering Angolan people. UNITA, it is sad to say, continues to obstruct progress and wage war. It should be made to heed the urgent warnings of the Security Council. The United Nations should, in the meantime, keep itself in readiness to increase its personnel in Angola as soon as a cease-fire is restored. The ever-increasing peace-keeping missions of the United Nations need sound financial support, if indeed peace is to be achieved and preserved. I therefore urge the States Members of our Organization to heed the Secretary-General's call in his current report for adequate funding for peace-keeping operations.

Mr. Touré (Guinea-Bissau), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Namibia is very much encouraged by the recent conclusion of an agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba on immigration issues. It is our fervent hope that the signing of this agreement will serve as the beginning of serious negotiations to resolve all aspects of the long-standing dispute between them, in the interest of peace, trade, development and good neighbourliness. I made the same plea last year from here, and the latest development helps to keep my hope alive. Namibia enjoys excellent friendly and productive relations with both countries. It is in this spirit that we advocate *rapprochement* between them.

We consider that in both elections and governance popular participation is a prerequisite for development and prosperity. At independence, however, Namibia inherited a dual economy that was based on an unequal distribution of wealth and disparity of income resulting from apartheid. As a result, the majority of the population has incomes that are far below the national average. To redress these imbalances, the Government has been pursuing prudent economic policies aimed at improving the lives of the majority of our citizens. The direction is clear, although the road ahead is replete with pitfalls. However, I must say that the Government's will and determination to succeed cannot be doubted.

In 1991, Namibia sought least-developed-country status to redress imbalances in education, health, housing and employment. The granting by the General Assembly of the "as if" least-developed-country option to Namibia, if not the full status of least-developed country, nonetheless allowed us to lay the foundation for the reconstruction of our economic and social structures.

In spite of the Government's best efforts in these critical areas, imbalances persist in our society. Provisional figures from the ongoing 1993-1994 National Housing, Income and Expenditure Survey provide clear evidence of skewed income distribution. Using private household consumption as an indicator, preliminary survey estimates show that 50 per cent of the poorest households account for about 13 per cent of the total consumption. The richest 10 per cent of the households consume about 33 per cent.

The low literacy rate, the low level of manufacturing industry and the extremely skewed distribution of income are a result of institutionalized social inequality over long periods. These social and economic sequels of the old apartheid order continue to bedevil the Government's developmental efforts. In accordance with our current "as if" status, and with the assistance of the World Bank, the Namibian Government is at present preparing a public expenditure review. The findings so far point to dramatic income disparities, in spite of the efforts by the Government that I alluded to earlier.

It is in this context that Namibia wishes to appeal once again to the States Members of our Organization for an extension of the "as if" least-developed-country status for an additional number of years. This will be an enormous contribution to our determined efforts to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged Namibians. We thank those States and agencies that have implemented resolution 46/204, on "as if" least-developed-country status and appeal for their continued assistance, which will strengthen the foundation we have laid for development and further consolidate our democracy.

The United Nations is centrally placed to address the major global problems facing us. Its focus, however, should not be limited to the issues of peace and security. The other critical issues, reconstruction and development, must be given the same serious attention. The World Summit on Social Development, for example, must be a forum for us to renew our commitment and political will to effectively address the diverse social and economic problems. We must come away from Copenhagen to act; the international community this time will need to summon more courage in order to translate into action the bold decisions we shall take. There is a linkage between the Plan of Action and follow-up mechanisms adopted at the Cairo population Conference and the goals of the Copenhagen and the Beijing Conferences in 1995. This requires greater and systematic coordination, so as to ensure economy, efficiency and the achievement of goals we all share.

The continued marginalization and exclusion of women from many spheres of life are a challenge to us all. The platform for action to be adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing next year, must therefore assure the full and equal participation of women at all levels of society. Namibia's Constitution calls for affirmative action and enlightened policies to effect positive change in this area of human endeavour.

Namibia is an active member of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic and will continue to pursue the vigorous promotion of trade in the South Atlantic region, including the development of fisheries and marine resources as well as tourism on a sustainable basis. The South Atlantic region comprises a great expanse of waters, which the countries of the Zone are committed to keep nuclear-free. Similarly, African countries are about to sign a treaty for the denuclearization of the continent.

In recent weeks, important meetings of Ministers and officials of the African and Latin American countries have taken place in Punta del Este, Uruquay, and Brasilia, Brazil, to further advance dialogue and cooperation on issues of common interest. It was in this spirit of South-South cooperation that Namibia supported the establishment of the South Centre, towards whose operations we have already made a significant contribution.

I should now like to state Namibia's position on the overall reform of the United Nations, and in particular equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Namibia does not believe that the present decision- making machinery of the Security Council will effectively serve the international community in the twenty-first century. Change towards a more representative Council would enhance its legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness.

Representation on the Security Council must reflect the phenomenal numerical growth in the membership of the General Assembly. In line with the principle of geographical and equitable representation, Africa is entitled to an appropriate representation of no fewer than two permanent seats on the Security Council. For us, Security Council reform means more than merely adding two or more industrialized permanent members. What is required is democracy, transparency and fair play. Namibia reiterates its position that the veto power is outdated and undemocratic and should be abolished. Equally, the General Assembly should not be allowed to lose its authority, competence and relevance in the reform process. Rather, it too needs further strengthening in all aspects.

Namibia is of the strong view that the United Nations, and Africa in particular, should leave no stone unturned to ensure that the people of Western Sahara are not left to face their fate alone. The decolonization and political emancipation of Africa cannot be declared complete without self-determination for them as well, through a democratic referendum jointly supervised by the United Nations and the OAU.

With regard to the dispute between two of our esteemed friends, India and Pakistan, on the question of Jammu and Kashmir, Namibia urges them to pursue peaceful dialogue and promote bilateral negotiations without public confrontation.

On another issue, we are encouraged by Libya's acceptance of Security Council resolution 731 (1992) and its expressed willingness to resolve the Lockerbie crisis with the three Western Powers. Dialogue and diplomacy should be placed on the front burner.

Next year the Non-Proliferation Treaty review and extension Conference will be held. Namibia is a signatory to the Treaty. It goes without saying that the Conference will provide a golden opportunity for review, assessment and extension of this vital Treaty, which has so far helped to prevent nuclear war. There is also a proposal by Zimbabwe, a proposal that we fully support, to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Other critical issues, such as general and complete disarmament, nuclear technology, nuclear-weapon-free zones and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, also need to be discussed and resolved. Once there is consensus on these and other related concerns, the extension of the Treaty, limited or unlimited, can be resolved to the satisfaction of both nuclear and non-nuclear States parties.

The peace process in the Middle East continues to gain momentum and wider acceptance in the region and beyond it. For us, the centre-piece of this peace process is and must remain full realization of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which must lead to complete nationhood.

In conclusion, as we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and are about to usher in a new millennium, it is time for the world to take stock. The world leadership of today comes largely from a generation that saw violent conflicts, the untold devastation of societies and families and shattered hopes and dreams. We can, on the whole, visualize peace, though it is not yet assured in all regions. However, the vision of peace prevails over the vision of conflicts, and we must be determined to defend it. It is the vision of peace that we must bequeath to the next generation. That should be the gift of our time to the next century.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, on whom I now call.

Mr. Mesfin (Ethiopia): Allow me first to extend to Ambassador Amara Essy heartfelt congratulations on his unanimous election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. His election is a fitting tribute both to him and to his country, Côte d'Ivoire. While expressing our confidence in his skills and capacity to guide this session to a successful conclusion, I wish to assure him of the full cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of the heavy responsibility he has assumed.

I wish also to join the heads of delegations who spoke before me in the very pleasant task of welcoming the new democratic South Africa into the United Nations. The recent happy events in South Africa mark a turning point in the history of Africa. They have opened up new vistas for fruitful economic cooperation across the African continent and have allowed the international community to be victorious over institutional racism.

It has now been a few years since the international community entered into a new era relatively free of ideological polarization. The nuclear confrontation that had haunted the international community before the end of the cold war is now more or less behind us. The demise of the cold war has in this regard contributed to the lifting of the thick veil that had hindered the appreciation of our interdependence. None of the major problems of the present world can be effectively dealt with in the absence of an approach that takes seriously the fact that we live in an interdependent world. The challenges of the environment, the problems of climate change, the unrestrained growth in population and questions of economic growth and development, among others, are all issues that call for greater cooperation between States.

It is not too early for us to assess to what extent the international community has taken advantage of new opportunities and, with the major obstacles to joint action having now been removed, how much progress the world has made in addressing the critical problems facing us. Some of these ostensibly affect only part of humanity, but, in fact, are directly or indirectly the problems of the international community as a whole.

The ever-deteriorating economic and social conditions faced by the majority of the peoples in the developing world and the abject poverty in which they are condemned to live are the most critical challenge facing the world. The effects of this reality reverberate through all aspects of international life, and they impinge on all issues now routinely accepted as the common challenges of the international community. Actions designed to deal with concerns related to international peace and security, to the environment, to climate change, to population growth and development and to a host of other interrelated concerns will remain only off-target and, at best, partial measures if most of the developing world is allowed to continue to wallow in poverty, and if, as a consequence, despair and hopelessness continue to be the dominant mood of present and future generations in the South.

In Africa, for instance, where a genuine fear of marginalization in international economic cooperation has in recent years become the prevailing mood, much of the explanation for the scale, intensity and duration of the conflicts must be sought in the continent's continuing economic decline and in the consequent social malaise and hopelessness generated by that sad reality. The economic history of Africa over the last two decades is one of precipitate decline. The 1980s was a lost decade, but the first half of the present one is proving to be no better.

Each African conflict may have its own unique local as well as extra-local features, but all of them, in one way or another, grow out of the humanly impossible economic and social situations that provide societies with neither hope nor a future.

From Liberia to Somalia and from Rwanda to Burundi, what Africa has been witnessing in recent years is the virtual collapse, under the weight of unbearable economic and social difficulties, not only of State structures but also of traditional values and norms of social organization.

It seems therefore overdue for the United Nations, when it comes to addressing conflict situations such as those in Africa, to think and to act with the clear assumption that traditional notions of preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-making, although important, are not enough to maintain the peace and to make it durable. "An Agenda for Peace" will be far from sufficient if it does not go side by side with, and made an integral part of, "An Agenda for Development".

In our part of the world, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) took up a huge challenge when it decided to increase its capacity by setting up a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. This is an important step that requires the effective assistance of the international community, and we are appreciative of the support already being given to the OAU by some countries. But we have no illusions: even if the OAU had the capacity required to carry out its mandate in preventive diplomacy, it would not necessarily be able to make substantial inroads in ensuring durable peace in the continent.

Nor can the United Nations and the international community do any better unless the challenges faced in connection with preventive measures in the economic and social areas are taken up in the most serious manner and unless the economic and social decline of Africa is reversed. The bottom line is that no African country can categorically be said to be immune from the political and social consequences of the immense level of economic decline, which can be arrested only with the requisite level of international economic cooperation and development partnership. This, incidentally, could also be a way to arrest and contain all varieties of extremism.

It seems to us that it is only with the foregoing in mind and with the full appreciation of the very complex nature of some of the conflict situations in Africa that the United Nations can be an effective factor for peace in Africa. This approach would also allow the international community to appreciate fully actual movement, no matter how small, in the right direction towards the resolution of specific conflict situations in Africa. The validity of this is most clearly to be seen in the prevailing situation in Somalia.

More than a few still view the situation in Somalia as having shown no improvement and believe that conditions in that country have in fact deteriorated. That view is probably the major reason for the increasing calls for the speedy withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) from Somalia. That view is also certainly behind the latest Security Council resolution on Somalia.

The situation in Somalia, and most particularly in some parts of that country, is clearly still far from normal, and there is no question that the overall situation in the country is very fluid. The international community's frustration at the slow pace of the national-reconciliation process and at the lack of sufficient commitment by all sides in Somalia to their responsibility to sort out their own problems as speedily as possible is also understandable, and this is also our concern.

But the feeling that conditions in the country have become hopeless and that the general trend in Somalia holds no promise is not born of what has been taking place there since late last year. That the situation in Somalia today, from the point of view both of the level of armed clashes and of dialogue between Somalis of all factions, is far better than it was a year ago, or indeed a few months ago, cannot seriously be doubted.

No one can pretend to have a ready-made solution to the problem of power-sharing in Somalia, which has been one of the major hurdles preventing national reconciliation. The OAU and the countries of the subregion have continued to do everything possible to assist the Somalis to meet this challenge, firmly convinced that the agenda for peace and national reconciliation in the country should be set by Somalis themselves and that the role of extra-Somali parties, including that of UNOSOM, is to assist in the process. We believe that this has been a very fruitful approach. It is the one that has been adopted from the very beginning by President Meles Zenawi, whose OAU colleagues have given him the responsibility of following developments in Somalia.

From his station in Mogadishu, President Meles's envoy has been maintaining very close contact with the various Somali factions. Our general assessment is that the trends in Somalia are encouraging and that the Somalis are taking the first hesitant steps to sort out their problems. Although there is no guarantee of success, the general thrust of developments in Somalia is worthy of the support of the international community.

At this time last year UNOSOM was engaged in heavy combat with some Somali factions, and its presence in Somalia did not enjoy universal acceptance there. Today, the situation has changed so dramatically that there is consensus in the country that UNOSOM should stay, one way or another, until national reconciliation is achieved. It would indeed be ironic if the international community were to choose to ignore Somalia precisely when the situation is changing for the better.

The efforts of the countries of the Horn of Africa in the search for solutions to situations of conflicts have not been limited to Somalia. It is little more than a year since we in the subregion deployed the initiative of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) with a view to assisting in the resolution of the long-standing conflict in the Sudan - a conflict which has created a deep rift in Sudanese society, and whose implications for peace and security, as well as for the social and economic development of our region, are very great indeed.

In the course of the negotiations, the IGADD Committee's major goal was to help the parties to identify and address the central issues that have been the sources of the conflict in the Sudan - a country characterized by religious, ethnic and racial diversity. Pursuant to instructions from our Heads of State, the IGADD Committee of Foreign Ministers attempted, in a series of rounds of negotiation, to help the parties to narrow their differences over the root causes of the conflict and to arrive at a formula for overcoming the deep crisis affecting their countries. Because the IGADD process induced the parties to focus on the critical issues in the conflict, positions have become well defined. The degree of polarity reflected in these positions reveals the gravity of the root causes and explains why the talks have come to deadlock. Thus, the IGADD peace process is at a crossroads in that the positions of the parties have hardened, and the mediators are left to choose between abandoning their efforts and developing alternative strategies in response to the crisis.

Faced with this situation, the Ministerial Committee was compelled ultimately to refer the matter back to the IGADD Committee of Heads of State, which met recently in Nairobi. The Heads of State, while recognizing the logjam that has been created in the process of negotiation, have none the less unanimously decided that there is no alternative to continuing with the peace effort. The major consideration here has been the conviction of the Heads of State that a persisting crisis in the Sudan would be not only a cause of continuing bloodshed in that country but also a major source of instability and lack of peace in the subregion.

In this regard, the importance of the international community's input towards breaking the logjam in the IGADD peace initiative in the Sudan can hardly be underestimated. A solution to the problem can come only through the continued efforts of the countries of the region and the international community's support for those efforts.

We in Ethiopia have had more than our share of the tragedies associated with conflicts. It is three years since peace was restored to the country following three decades of civil war and internal strife. Over the past three years, the Transitional Government has focused its attention on three broad concerns - the restoration of peace and stability; the democratization of the political process, including the creation of conditions for enforcing the rule of law and setting up democratic institutions; and the liberalization of the economy and the freeing of the economic sector from the strait-jacket of the command economy imposed on our peoples by the military Government.

One of the unique aspects of the democratization process in Ethiopia has been the very extensive devolution of power to all regions of the country. In a country known for its excessive centralization of power - something that was pushed to absurdity by the previous Government: the major reason for the absence of peace in Ethiopia for so long - the new relationship between the centre and the regions is becoming a promising arrangement for genuine and meaningful participation of the people, at the grass-roots level, in the political process of their country. We believe that once democracy becomes relevant to the average person and at the grass roots, it will prove to be durable because the struggle between autocracy and democratic forms of governance will not then be between very narrow, elite groups, whether from the military or from other sectors of society.

As we approach the end of the period of transition in Ethiopia, we can say with full confidence that we have, by and large, achieved all the major objectives set for that period. Until three years ago Ethiopia's name was associated with political instability and civil war. Today Ethiopia has not only achieved peace but also become a factor for peace in its own subregion and beyond, as is vividly demonstrated by the Ethiopian peace-keeping contingent in Rwanda.

Moreover, we have been gratified by the recent successful elections for a Constituent Assembly, which will be convened very soon to prepare a constitution on the basis of which a general election will be held to install the first-ever democratically elected Government in the country.

In the course of the last three years, we in Ethiopia have benefited immensely from the generous assistance of the international community, for which we are very grateful. This assistance was again demonstrated during the recent drought, which affected over 7 million people. Thanks to the assistance of the international community, to the role the Ethiopian people themselves played and to the timely, effective measures taken by the Government, the effects of a drought that could have caused massive loss of life, dislocation and displacement commensurate with those of the 1984-1985 drought were successfully contained.

Even though Ethiopia has now started to stand on its own feet, we cannot pretend that we have even remotely begun to address the major challenges still facing us. The fledgling democratic process in a country with no democratic traditions will continue to be a major challenge. But the political will to solidify grass-roots democracy will always be there, among other things because the survival of countries as diverse as Ethiopia can be ensured only on the basis of democratic governance. However, the linchpin of the success of democracy in Ethiopia, as is also true for all similarly situated countries, is sustainable economic growth and development. Citizens who see no future for themselves or for their offspring can hardly be counted on - and for understandable reasons - to be a bedrock for stable Governments, without which democracy will have little chance of flourishing.

None the less, even in the economic sector we have made some notable gains, and our cooperation with the international financial institutions has so far been very encouraging. But the challenges ahead of us are immense, and we will continue to count on the support of the international community to help us put our country firmly on the path of sustainable growth and development.

One of the major positive outcomes of the demise of the cold war has been the new confidence placed in multilateral approaches to solving the major problems faced by our interdependent world. The United Nations, as the finest expression of multilateralism, has thus been given a new opportunity to make a difference in the world and to spearhead the efforts of the international community for peace and development. In this context, the democratization of the United Nations at all levels, and greater transparency in the operation of the organs of the Organization, including that of the Security Council and of the Secretariat, are some of the required steps which will guarantee that the United Nations can play to the fullest its potential appropriate role as the foremost multilateral Organization with the full confidence of peoples in the North as well as in the South. For our part, we will continue to do our share, and do all that is necessary to assist the United Nations in achieving its noble objectives and goals.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): It is a special pleasure and honour for me to extend, to my brother Amara Essy, my delegation's warmest congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. He is a highly esteemed and valued friend to many of us, and we can rest assured that his vast diplomatic and political experience, coupled with his proven leadership qualities, will guide this Assembly through a very productive and successful session.

The Assembly is also most grateful for the exemplary and skilful manner in which Ambassador

Insanally successfully conducted the affairs of the forty-eighth session during his tenure as President.

We must also recognize the dynamic and resourceful manner in which the Secretary-General has guided the Secretariat of the United Nations during this period of momentous internal and worldwide change. That the ordinary citizens of the world and its many poor have a humane and sensitive advocate in the halls of power of the United Nations is a great stabilizing factor. We wish the Secretary-General well in his unending efforts to bring peace and development to all corners of our troubled world.

As our Organization moves towards its fiftieth year, there is an air of concern for the state of the world, its people and the United Nations itself. Building upon our emphasis last year on the rights of the individual, the purview of the international community has expanded to encompass the right of the individual to a better economic and social life. The population Conference at Cairo highlighted the pressures of population on economic growth and development, and marked specific areas for action, with targets and goals, and next year's Copenhagen conference on social development will explore widespread poverty and unemployment, and the critical issue of social integration. We have come to realize that these problems cannot be solved in isolation by any of the principal actors - individuals, States or even the international community. Only by cooperating and working together to reinforce the special attributes of each can we begin to arrest the pervasive social disintegration, endemic conflict and world disorder that threaten our security and our future. Fortunately, in the United Nations, whatever its limitations, we have a truly international Organization at the centre of all these issues, which needs only proper use and reinforcement to reverse these corrosive trends.

As we review the developments of the past year in the light of the triumphs and tragedies experienced by the world body and by the international community, the picture which emerges is one of persistent conflict and pervasive poverty. Happily, some perennial points of antagonism, such as South Africa and Palestine, have witnessed extraordinary developments. For some, the dramatic accord between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, negotiated entirely by the Palestinians themselves, continues to be viewed with a measure of astonishment. True enough, the accord will not satisfy everyone, and conditions remain on future progress, but after so many decades of having a minimal voice in their destiny and of paltry changes in their condition, the Palestinians have made the first real breakthrough towards a Palestinian State. Efforts towards political and democratic institutionalization and administrative refinement, accompanied by widespread political participation and empowerment, are evolving slowly and may demonstrate to the international community the level of support lent by Palestinians to the direction implied by the accords. The substantial international assistance pledged and envisaged to underwrite the requisite stability and progress must be forthcoming in order to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian governing authority, and to achieve the goals of a functioning and efficient Palestinian entity.

The Palestinians have suffered long and hard under a harsh and often difficult occupation, enduring numerous false starts and misdirected illusions. They have now embarked on the road to self-determination and should receive the total support of the international community. But the eventual realization of a full Palestinian State must be clear, and any measures tending to render the occupied territories merely "self-administered" Bantustans, supplying labor to Israel's more developed economy, must be resisted by all means.

Not only the continent of Africa, but the entire world must take pride in the remarkable progress unfolding in South Africa. Under the inspiring and extraordinary leadership of President Mandela, South Africa has become an exemplary model for the international community of national reconciliation and unity. During the recent dramatic period in its history, South Africa was likewise fortunate to have had a visionary in the person of Mr. de Klerk, who was aware of the role of timing and recognized the need for change. While there have been many players in the struggle against apartheid, certainly none are more deserving of praise and recognition than the majority people of South Africa themselves. South Africa cannot fail to appreciate that all of Africa, and in fact the world, shares in its joy. We can only urge President Mandela and his country to continue to work together to advance the task of restructuring South Africa so that it truly realizes its undoubted greatness.

By now the world is painfully aware of the fate of Rwanda, torn apart by sheer hatred and intolerance, by leaders bent upon exploiting ethnic differences for selfish gains. Employing all manner of fear, intimidation and propaganda, they succeeded in stirring up nearly an entire people to turn against another, until the eventual human carnage, in so compressed a time span, was no doubt unequalled in human history. Even now, the intransigent leadership of the millions of suffering Hutus, eking out a bare existence in the volcanic soils of eastern Zaire or the other surrounding countries, refuses to acknowledge the plight of their people, dissuading them with threats and violence from returning to their country. Their actions cannot be pardoned; the perpetrators of this insane episode must be brought to justice and punished. Otherwise, their implacable goal of rearming and returning one day to the battle field promises a long night of recurring horror for Central Africa.

Regrettably, by paying no heed to the early signs of pending troubles, and by seeking ways to severely limit its involvement, the world body lost the opportunity to play a significant part in preventing this tragedy. Worse still, the difficulty in assembling and suitably equipping a United Nations peace-keeping force has not helped to instil in those who have fled the confidence needed to return, and in those who have remained the confidence needed to stay.

All this leaves the new Government of Rwanda in the throes of a critical dilemma, requiring immeasurable soul searching. For a country from which nearly one-third of the population has fled - in the case of Rwanda some 2 million people - the numbers are so large and disproportionate as to deny the Government a large measure of the legitimacy it badly needs. Something very serious must be done to bring the two peoples together in meaningful national reconciliation, with a Government that reflects this. Certainly the spirit and intent of the Arusha Accord remains even more valid today in the light of what has taken place.

Note must also be taken of the valiant efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), facing terrible odds in a situation of such frightening chaos. Despite its small numbers, its attempts to alleviate the suffering and protect the vulnerable undoubtedly saved many lives and provided a measure of sanity in a sea of madness. The world body should recognize with pride and great appreciation what has been done by the personnel of UNAMIR and its illustrious leader, General Romeo Dallaire of Canada.

One reason for pessimism in Central Africa is the fact that so many of the factors that led to breakdown in Rwanda are also present in Burundi. There the ominous rise in killings, coupled with the accelerating pace of rearmament, should cause extreme concern to the world community. With the army at the epicentre of power, and with weapons calling the shots, so to speak, government and politics could remain tense and unstable. However, we are strongly encouraged by the recent indications of an emerging political consensus, as evidenced by the installation of a new president. This is a positive trend which we hope will manifest itself in all aspects of political, economic and social activity.

The plights of Angola and of Liberia are likewise grave; both are locked in a destructive state of shooting negotiations. In both, the humanitarian situation is again regressing and a cease-fire is nowhere in sight; the gun is again the preferred method of voting. Fortunately, progress toward peace and an elected national Government is still on course in Mozambique, where the leadership seems to be serious about ending the prolonged and destructive state of conflict and engaging for the first time in building a democratic State through national elections, scheduled for October this year.

The United Nations Observer Mission in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) is determined to fulfil all targets and tasks on schedule and believes in the prospects of success for the people of Mozambique. Its strong efforts reinforce those of the people and, together, they should be a commendable success story for the United Nations and Mozambique.

In Haiti, the long-anticipated international intervention, sanctioned in Security Council resolution 940 (1994), has taken place. A multinational force has peacefully secured the country, thanks in large measure to the good deal of prudence shown, and the intense diplomatic efforts undertaken, by the United States. We are pleased that the junta has deemed it unwise to oppose the world, and instead has agreed to relinquish power in order to facilitate the return of the democratically elected President, Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

In other areas, Djibouti remains saddened by the status quo in the bilateral discussions between the two Gulf neighbours, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, concerning the three islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. We believe there is an urgent need for a renewed and serious effort to resolve this dispute through all possible peaceful avenues, including referring it to the International Court of Justice.

Bosnia remains a high-profile international flashpoint. Despite the warning of dire consequences, the Bosnian Serbs have rejected the final compromise proposal of the five-nation Contact Group, which awards them 49 per cent of the country, over two-thirds of which they have taken by force. In the weeks since the rejection, nothing has been done to punish the Bosnian Serbs, as it had been intimated would be done. In fact, the Serbs continue to apply consistent pressure on the Bosnian Government and the United Nations, targeting Sarajevo and its airport, blocking United Nations food convoys and strangling safe areas such as Srebrenica and Gorazde. Even "ethnic cleansing" has resumed. One shudders to think what would have happened immediately if it had been the Muslim party that had rejected the proposal.

This inaction reflects the blatant unwillingness of the international community to take any meaningful action against the culprits, let alone punish them. This only encourages further intransigence. The Serb reaction to difficult situations consists in resorting to wild, radical behaviour, eliciting retreat and concessions by the peacemakers. One can never say what they will do tomorrow, which means their word today has no intrinsic value. To have rewarded Belgrade with a loosening of the sanctions in the absence of a viable and comprehensive peace agreement or concrete proof of compliance is to mistake the form of this family dispute for its substance - perhaps because there is none. And what is the benefit for the Bosnian Government, which agreed to the peace plan? Will steps be taken to remedy the onerous military and humanitarian imbalance? Will Serbia-Montenegro recognize Bosnia within its current borders or agree to cooperate with the International Tribunal? The proper course of action, in the absence of any semblance of sanity and settlement, is to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian Government. What else?

I would now like to address the question of Somalia. The return to a functioning civil society in Somalia is, if anything, even more remote, as meaningful inter-faction talks have ceased, security is evaporating, the dream of national reconciliation fading and the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) focused on the process of withdrawing. The only certainty in Somalia is political uncertainty. As a neighbour that has observed and knows all too well Somalia's convulsive history, Djibouti can only be distressed at the continuing problems and utter hopelessness.

What is to be done? For too long the United Nations has sought voluntary disarmament, conferences of national reconciliation, interim government and hopefully, in the end, a government elected by the people. Creating pressure for this process is the looming departure of UNOSOM scheduled for 31 March 1995, when operations may be closed down. Although we anticipate that the people will ultimately have the final say through elections, at present it is the warlords and their factions that have been given a comprehensive veto. On the assumption that they are the powers that be in Somalia, considerable time has been spent attempting to gain their agreement in the hope of eventually reaching the people through them. But clearly the faction leaders desire the political process to stop with them without flowing through to the people. So at their door everything stops, and the people are never given a say or an input.

The obvious plan of the faction leaders is undoubtedly to induce the United Nations to believe conditions are propitious for withdrawal and then to settle scores among themselves until someone is victorious. But in the process, can we discount the possibility of a return to conditions of starvation and famine, the kind of Somalia that existed prior to the arrival of the United Nations? What will be the immediate and long-term consequences or implications of leaving Somalia in anarchy to the forlorn women, children and innocent population of Somalia and to its neighbours, which are already weighed down under an incessant flow of refugees? Will there be a Somali State in the end? Perhaps yes, perhaps no. It is hard, however, to preclude a positive eventuality, however far-fetched that may seem at present.

Clearly, what is absent from the whole process is the voice of the people in the selection of true, legitimate leadership and government to counter the present abdication of power to bands of gun-holders. We must find ways of directly giving voice to the people, leading straight to legitimate government. Solidifying these steps would then be the job of ample United Nations forces on hand, drawing upon this Organization's experience in Cambodia, Mozambique and elsewhere. Certainly, the thought of leaving Somalia with nothing in place and so many lives at risk is both abhorrent and unacceptable, a case where it will be interpreted that a "failed State" has been abandoned by the United Nations. Walking out of a society in a mess before reconstituting it as a functioning entity will undeniably mark a precedent in the history of the United Nations and will certainly represent a far cry from the hopes, promises and commitments enshrined in the Charter.

Although I have briefly explored situations in a number of world trouble spots, the sad fact is that others appear to be gathering wind in their sails, ready to burst forth. Consequently, demands for expanded United Nations involvement can be expected to rise, and the question that must again be asked, based upon recent experiences is: Could the Organization cope? More and more we see peace-keeping patterns of an ad hoc nature, struggling under the lack of equipment, logistics, intelligence and manpower, poor coordination and communications. But the fault can hardly be laid at the feet of the United Nations if its urgent requests for material and human resources are not met or are met slowly or inadequately. With no force or equipment of its own, and therefore required to begin each operation from scratch, the resulting delays have severely hampered timely United Nations reaction - leading, for example, to genocide in Rwanda. And all this says nothing of the difficulties stemming from ever-dwindling resources.

Such a state of affairs must be a cause for concern, as the United Nations will increasingly be forced to limit its responses to diplomatic initiatives, such as we have seen in Haiti. In place of classic peace-keeping, we will witness a growing reliance upon ad hoc multinational intervention, the so-called posse response, but that too has its limitations - for we are concerned with whether there is to be meaningful collective security. If United Nations peace-keeping withers, and in its place we are forced to rely on ad hoc interventions, then we need to ask under what basis that involvement will be forthcoming. In view of these developing trends, the United Nations may be forced to rely more upon simply letting conflicts run their natural course, as in Somalia.

What this situation amply demonstrates is that the United Nations needs a well-trained, mobile, standing force with rapid deployment capability. Delayed deployment of undermanned and under-equipped units, as was the situation in Rwanda, fails to inspire confidence. The availability of a rapid reaction force may at least address a good number of probable conflict situations, often serving as a deterrent simply by virtue of being in a position to act quickly.

It is fashionable these days to say that we live in an international world, a "global village" in which nations can no longer avoid the effects of developments in their neighbours or the world. For Djibouti, this fact has a particularly telling impact, for we have been forced to grapple with the effects of years of past instability, warfare and massive national disintegration in the Horn of Africa, as in Somalia at present. From the financially debilitating incursion of heavily armed militia to the equally draining cost of demobilization that we face right now; to the flood of refugees, the care and cost of which has overwhelmed our infrastructure and health, educational and housing services; to the crippling loss of vital markets, as in Somalia, for our services; coupled with the devastation brought by the seemingly unending drought and pestilence, Djibouti has inevitably been slowly moving towards negative growth and development in the last few years.

Yet, whatever the extent of our difficulties arising from these circumstances, Djibouti has steadfastly sought to remain a good-neighbourly State, contributing, to the extent permitted by our meagre resources, to regional stability and peace efforts.

Moreover, recognizing the need to further involve the people of Djibouti in the complex process of development and governance, we have overhauled our political structure and institutions.

Still there remains a disturbing predicament facing Djibouti and other countries like it in the world, namely that countries which are relatively stable, moderate and democratic and which are contributing, and participating in international efforts, to bring relief, reduce tensions, halt aggression and conflict tend to be overlooked by the international community. Despite the drain on our meagre resources because of refugees and market losses, and despite our continuing positive contributions to regional and international peace efforts, it seems that the general calm and freedom prevailing in my country are lulling the world into believing that there are no really pressing concerns or needs or for assistance. Too often, little attention is paid to a nation, it seems, until it is too desperate and near collapse, or until it is perceived by the international community as a source of new danger to peace and security, thereby qualifying it for aid and assistance. This makes little sense, and is indeed a mockery of the preventive measures that are often mentioned but seldom instituted. We deserve better, but we remain quite confident that both our efforts and our urgent needs for critical resources will be recognized by our friends and development partners.

Djibouti, and all the countries of the Horn, have been subjected to the ravages of destructive natural causes, well beyond our individual power to cope with them. Such is the inexorable drift of the Sahara southward, or the severe drought conditions leading to famine which now plagues the Horn. Overall, an estimated 20 million people are at risk in 10 countries, facing farms that are parched, rivers that are dried up, and pestilence. Anticipating possible mass starvation resulting from the lack of rain and water, food stocks were made ready, only to be virtually depleted by a sudden emergency elsewhere, as in Rwanda. A pervasive air of hopelessness and apprehension now grips the nations of the Horn, the urgency of which merits the immediate concern and attention of the international community.

Adding to the difficulties arising from natural causes, nations just as often face social forces over which they have little control. Domestic macro-economic policies in many industrialized countries, seeking to combat inflation or balance international payments, often have drastic effects on the demand for third-world products and on commodity prices. The result, as one analyst explains, is frequently declining terms of trade, sharply increased interest rates, reduced exports, massive increases in current account deficits, interest and debt-service payments, all at a time of reduced aid and other capital flows. External payment restraints, in particular, have affected levels of domestic production in both industrial and agricultural sectors, at times even production for export, leading to inflation, acute financial crises and mounting debt.

Many third world countries simply lack the economic capacity and flexibility to react in the short term. In the long run, everyone benefits from greater coherence and efficiency in the international economic system. Clearly the world's economic and financial system requires much more order, predictability, coordination and fairness.

Along these lines, I feel it is imperative to refer again to the issue of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields - in particular the relevant General Assembly resolutions bearing particularly on the vital field of operational activities for development, and the General Assembly's important coordinating role. As the most truly representative body of the world's people and States, the General Assembly needs to return to its original role as contemplated by the founding Member States and set forth in the Charter. It must provide a more decisive lead in strategy and policy, in reviewing, in critiquing and approving the operation of the total system.

Likewise, as opposed to the extreme decentralization current in United Nations economic activities and institutions - each one a separate entity unto itself, often at cross purposes - we must also return to the original role foreseen in the Charter for the Economic and Social Council as an economic security council. The Economic and Social Council must remain open to receive and address the concerns of Africa, which should not be hampered in its effective and beneficial participation in the Council and its subsidiary bodies. In this regard, we welcomed the Secretary General's report "An Agenda for Development", which provided the opportunity for a comprehensive review of world economic and social problems, particularly in Africa. Africa's development concerns have been well documented in General Assembly resolution 48/214 on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, which we hope can serve as a basis on which the international community can act in solidarity in mobilizing new and additional resources to solve the pressing problems of the poor. For if we are to address constructively the questions of economic growth and development, of the formulation of truly beneficial international macro-economic systems, we need to begin to take those confidence- building measures that will bring the North and the South closer and strengthen the concept of partnership.

In the area of collective security, there remains the imperative need to expand the Security Council and to make it more transparent and democratic through an increase in its membership and by making it more accountable to the General Assembly. There should be periodic reviews of the Council's structure and functions in line with international developments. A more equitable geographical representation is critical, along with an increase in permanent representation for developing countries.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.22

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

22nd Meeting
Friday, 7 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy .... (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Address by Mr. David Kpomakpor, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia.

Mr. David Kpomakpor, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, His Excellency Professor David Kpomakpor, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Chairman Kpomakpor: Mr. President, I wish to join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you on your election to guide the deliberations of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly. As you undertake this solemn and challenging responsibility we assure you of the Liberian delegation's fullest cooperation and support.

Let me also convey our gratitude to your erudite predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for the skilful manner in which he guided the deliberations of the last session.

Our able and distinguished Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, deserves special commendation for his unwavering commitment to the principles of the United Nations and his untiring efforts in the promotion of world peace, international security and human dignity. We are particularly pleased at his keen interest and involvement in the search for durable peace in Liberia.

As we approach the midpoint of the last decade in this millennium we are encouraged that our world continues to make steady progress in the transition from years of ideological confrontation to convergence on global interdependence.

A manifestation of this changing situation is the growing utilization of a consensual approach to addressing such burning issues on the international agenda as human rights, population and the environment. In this regard we welcome the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo and look forward to the World Summit for Social Development, to be convened in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1995, which will consider the core issues of alleviating and reducing poverty, expanding productive employment and enhancing social integration.

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

The peaceful transition from apartheid to majority rule in South Africa has been of monumental significance to Africa. We heartily welcome the new Republic of South Africa into the fold of the world body and look forward to the positive contributions it can and will surely make to the achievement of the noble goals of the United Nations.

These positive developments in the international system are, however, often overshadowed by flashpoints of ethnic conflicts around the world. The situations in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia, and in my own country, Liberia, among others, appear to be intractable. The brutality and destruction unleashed by these conflicts often tend to overwhelm the international community and make peace-keeping a major preoccupation of the United Nations and, to an increasing degree, of regional organizations as well. Economic and human resources that could otherwise be applied to improving the human condition are being expended on peace-keeping activities.

Some of these intra-State conflicts are so complex that policy makers are forced to debate the pros and cons of peace-keeping or peacemaking when the main issue should be that of saving lives, especially in those situations where a legitimate governing authority is absent.

The result is that the international community sometimes reacts with what may amount to short-cut solutions. Often attempts at resolving some of these conflicts unwittingly overlook the intransigence and recalcitrance of warlords who were the ones primarily responsible for bringing untold suffering and deprivation to their own people. These conflicts also create lucrative opportunities for arms dealers and international supporters of warlords.

A disturbing phenomenon associated with these conflicts is that of the child soldier. Children are recruited, indoctrinated and trained in the art of murder, mayhem and genocide, thus depriving a country of an entire generation of its human resources. This is particularly true for my own country, Liberia, where the great majority of the 60,000 combatants are children who have yet to complete their primary education. The forced conscription of our children — the building-blocks of our future — must be stopped, since it violates the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Therefore we should not yield to any action that has the effect of sanctioning the acquisition of power through the use of force or promoting solutions aimed at appeasing warlords at the expense of the larger unarmed population.

The world has witnessed the rise, during the last four years, of a powerful movement for democracy and democratization. This movement has swept asunder some of the strongest totalitarian regimes in its wake, from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The international community must therefore demonstrate its resolve to support this movement so that the democratic aspirations of all peoples are realized throughout the world. It would be an indictment of the present world leadership for it to simply watch countries become involved in these conflicts, which may have been ignited initially by the spark of democratization.

It is against this background that we wish to briefly review the Liberian peace process.

At the outset, I should like to register the heartfelt gratitude of the Liberian people to the gallant men of ECOMOG — the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Military Observer Group — who foiled the attempted coup on 15 September 1994. Since 1990, their selfless sacrifice has provided a security blanket in parts of Liberia, thus enabling us to work towards the attainment of peace in our country.

It will be recalled that in December 1989 the Liberian situation exploded into an armed conflict, ostensibly to rid the country of military dictatorship. By mid-1990, however, the conflict had degenerated into a three-way struggle for power. The State machinery had disintegrated.

None of the armed factions engaged in the struggle appeared capable of winning a decisive victory and establishing legitimate authority. In the wake of this deadly stalemate, ECOWAS intervened with a two-pronged peace plan: A peace-monitoring force would be dispatched to Liberia to provide security for the country, while the Liberians themselves would re-establish an internal civil administration to prepare the country for democratic elections.

The ECOWAS peace-monitoring group, ECOMOG, arrived in Liberia in August 1990. An All-Liberia Conference was convened in Banjul, the Gambia, in the same month, and elected the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU). Upon the insistence of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), a second, All-Liberia Conference was convened in Monrovia in 1991, which endorsed the Interim Government.

Unfortunately, the NPFL, which insisted on the Conference as a precondition for peace, walked out during the deliberations.

Several other meetings of the warring factions were held in Banjul, Freetown, Dakar, Bamako, Lomé, Yamoussoukro and Geneva, in search of peace with the armed factions. With remarkable success, the ECOWAS peace plan, with an interim civilian administration for Liberia and with ECOMOG, restored some degree of stability and provided a semblance of law and order in the country for a period of two years.

On 15 October 1992, the NPFL launched an unprovoked attack on ECOMOG and the people of Monrovia in what was termed "Operation Octopus". The refusal of the NPFL to fully comply with the Yamoussoukro Accord gave rise to a new armed group, the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), which claimed its sole purpose was to free the Liberian people from the NPFL.

With hostilities raging among the armed factions, the United Nations, in concert with ECOWAS and the OAU, decided to convene a peace conference of the parties to the conflict in Geneva in June 1993. The meeting was attended by the NPFL, ULIMO and IGNU. The IGNU delegation included the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).

The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative chaired the meeting, which was also attended by the OAU Eminent Person, the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS and the Field Commander of ECOMOG.

The framework agreed upon in Geneva was formally concluded and signed by the parties in Cotonou, Republic of Benin, on 25 July 1993. The overriding principle of the Cotonou Agreement was to achieve disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions, which agreed that they would give up their arms in exchange for participating in the formation of a new government.

The Cotonou Agreement provided for the establishment of the Liberian National Transitional Government, headed by a five-man Executive Council of State, a 35-member Transitional Legislative Assembly and the reconstitution of the Supreme Court and the Ad Hoc Elections Commission. Each of these organs was to be composed of nominees representing the parties to the Agreement. The Cabinet positions were apportioned in consultation with the parties.

The Liberian National Transitional Government was given the mandate to extend its authority throughout the country, to repatriate and resettle refugees from abroad, and to conduct free and fair elections within six months.

Disarmament was to be carried out concomitantly with the seating of the Liberian National Transitional Government, and the armed factions agreed to cooperate with the expanded ECOMOG to disarm under the supervision of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia.

The Liberian National Transitional Government was inducted into office on 7 March 1994, and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General gave assurances that disarmament would commence simultaneously. He also assured the Liberian people that the armed factions would comply fully with the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement. After the seating of the Liberian National Transitional Government the military aspects of the peace process did not keep pace with the political aspects as contemplated by the Agreement. Moreover, it took six months for the additional troops from Tanzania and Uganda to arrive in Liberia. The expanded ECOMOG troops were never deployed and the factions did not disarm. They continue to believe in the attainment of political power by force of arms or, more precisely, through the barrel of the gun.

Consequently, there has been a mushrooming of armed groups. There are now two factions of ULIMO and two factions of NPFL. There is also the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) and the Lofa Defence Force (LDF). Each of the breakaway factions of ULIMO and the NPFL, together with the LPC and LDF, have joined in a coalition of forces to fight the branch of NPFL led by Mr. Charles Taylor. As I speak, the battle in central Liberia rages on. A consequence of this situation is the mass exodus of frightened citizens who have had to seek refuge and havens in neighbouring countries and a heightening of the humanitarian needs of the country.

I come now to the Liberian National Conference. Realizing the current morass in the country and the uncooperative attitude of the warring factions towards the Liberian National Transitional Government, a citizens' consultative meeting was convened in Monrovia from 29 to 30 July 1994. At that meeting the people of Liberia determined that for the last four years the destiny of the country had been largely dictated by the warring factions and that they, the citizens, were being marginalized. They also concluded that the stalemate in the peace process was the result of the intransigence of the warring factions with respect to disarmament and their failure to cooperate with the Liberian National Transitional Government, ECOMOG and UNOMIL in carrying out their respective responsibilities and duties under the Cotonou Agreement.

The people of Liberia therefore decided that they must, and would, become involved in breaking the stalemate in the peace process. They have therefore convened since 24 August 1994 the Liberian National Conference (LNC), with representatives coming from all walks of life, including the 13 political subdivisions of the country, political parties, interest groups, professional organizations, social and religious organizations, trade and labour unions, student and youth groups and women's organizations.

The Conference organizers endeavoured to involve and encourage the participation of the warring factions. The Conference was addressed by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers; the former United States President, Jimmy Carter; and the OAU Eminent Person, the Rev. Dr. Canaan Banana. General Arnold Quainoo, ECOMOG's first field commander and Special Representative of the ECOWAS Chairman, and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Dr. Edouard Benjamin, also addressed the Conference and expressed support for it.

The Conference agenda included disarmament and demobilization, governance and elections. The consensus of the Conference was that the fundamental problem of the Liberian conflict is not governance, but, rather, the refusal of the armed groups to disarm and demobilize. The Conference therefore called for strong and effective sanctions to be applied against armed groups and warring factions which fail to cooperate in the disarmament process.

With respect to governance, the Conference indicated that the mandate of the Liberian National Transitional Government should be extended and the Council of State strengthened so as to take the country through to free and fair democratic elections. We also see the Liberian National Conference as the embodiment of the democratic aspirations of the Liberian people and their opposition to the acquisition of power by force. Too much time, energy and resources and too many lives have been lost by Liberians and other West Africans to settle now for a less than honourable, just and lasting solution.

I turn next to the Akosombo Agreement. The Liberian National Conference had gained momentum and was at the height of the debate on the fundamental problems of disarmament, governance and elections, when His Excellency, President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Chairman of ECOWAS, along with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, undertook new initiatives to resolve the impasse in the peace process. A meeting of leaders of two warring factions, Mr. Charles Taylor of the NPFL and Lieutenant-General Alhaji S.G. Kromah, of ULIMO, together with the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia, Lieutenant-General J. Hezekiah Bowen, was held at Akosombo, Ghana. The OAU Eminent Person, Dr. Canaan Banana, also attended the meeting. Except for General Bowen, the Liberian National Transitional Government delegation was excluded from the deliberations at Akosombo.

On 12 September 1994, General Bowen, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), without authority signed the Akosombo Accord, along with the two warring leaders: Charles Taylor and Alhaji Kromah. The Agreement did not adequately address the issue of disarmament but instead called for the restructuring of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG). The two armed factions would each nominate a representative; General Bowen — selected without consultation — would represent the AFL, the constitutional army of Liberia; the ongoing Liberia National Conference would nominate one civilian; and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) would consult to nominate the fifth member of the Council. The restructured LNTG would have a life-span of 16 months, with general elections slated for October 1995 and installation of the newly elected government in January 1996. The LNTG delegation registered its reservations about the Agreement with the Ghanian Government before returning to Liberia.

In Liberia, the Akosombo Accord caused an outcry and widespread indignation. It was viewed as yet another attempt to appease the armed factional leaders whose uncompromising stance has been responsible for prolonging the conflict, causing the death of so many Liberians and bringing so much destruction and suffering upon the people.

The Government of Liberia has therefore rejected the Akosombo Accord for a number of reasons. First, the Accord endeavoured to reduce the armed forces of

Liberia, the constitutional army, to a warring faction. Secondly, it failed to address adequately the political problems — disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions — that have been the single most important stumbling-block to the peace process. Thirdly, the premises underpinning the Akosombo Accord were fundamentally flawed. It ascribed power and influence to armed leaders whose standing, credibility and control within their own respective factions are questionable. There was also a failure to recognize the changing military positions of the factional leaders on the ground. For example, Mr. Charles Taylor of the NPFL has been unable to return to, or regain, his headquarters at Gbarnga since leaving the meeting in Ghana, because his forces have been driven out by rival factions. A few days after General Hezekiah Bowen returned from Ghana, there was an attempted coup and mutiny in his army ranks, and he had to seek refuge at the headquarters of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Military Observer Group (ECOMOG). General Alhaji Kromah's ULIMO remains split.

We are pleased to note that as an indication of his sincerity and commitment towards finding a just and lasting solution to the Liberian crisis, the President of Ghana and current Chairman of ECOWAS, His Excellency Jerry Rawlings, was quick to respond to the concerns raised by the Liberian people to the Akosombo Accord. Within days of its signing, he dispatched a delegation to Liberia to hold consultations on the Agreement. He has since convened a broader-based consultative meeting in Accra. Consultations on the Agreement continue in this regard.

The Liberian peace process is now at a critical stage. The reaction to the Akosombo Accord and the renewed outbreak of hostilities in central Liberia among the armed factions may lead some to conclude that Liberians are simply not ready for peace, but this is not so. We are ready for peace. We believe peace could finally be within easy reach, given the right mix of initiatives. Recent events in the country, including the failed coup attempt by dissident elements of the Armed Forces of Liberia and renewed hostilities among the warring factions, reinforce the need for effective action towards disarmament and demobilization.

I would be amiss if I did not say how grateful the people of Liberia are to the United Nations, ECOWAS, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), non-governmental organizations, relief agencies and the entire international community, who have made untold sacrifices and contributed towards the search for peace in Liberia. In this light, we wish to appeal to the world community to give greater support to the work of ECOMOG by providing additional logistics and resources to enable it effectively to execute its mandate under the Cotonou Agreement.

Haiti provides a hopeful example of what can be accomplished when the international community stays the course in helping to find a peaceful solution to intra-State conflicts. Indeed, while the same set of variables that influenced tougher United Nations action in Haiti may not obtain in Liberia, the people of Liberia are crying out to the world, especially to those countries that are better endowed and constantly hail the benefits of democracy, to take the high moral ground and lend their potent voices and wherewithal to ending the human misery and suffering in Liberia.

I am therefore confident that the United Nations, which has striven to implement the provisions of its Charter for about half a century, can still muster the courage and will to respond to the requisites of peace, democracy and development for the truly global era that is dawning as we approach the twenty-first century.

The President (interpretation from French): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. David Kpomakpor, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9

General debate *(continued)*

The President *(interpretation from French):* The first speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo, His Excellency Mr. Boumbera Alassounouma.

Mr. Alassounouma (Togo) *(interpretation from French):* More than anyone else, Sir, you are aware of what excellent and solid relations of cooperation, friendship and fraternity have existed for many years now between your country, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo. It is thus with great joy and enormous pride that my country welcomes your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

I therefore wish, on behalf of the Government of Togo, in the name of my delegation, and in my own capacity, to congratulate you most sincerely on this tribute to you and to your fraternal country, Côte d'Ivoire.

The Togolese delegation and I myself assure you of our support. We are convinced that your competence and your long experience in international affairs augur well for the success of our work.

I should like to take this occasion to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, the Permanent Representative of Guyana, who, with effectiveness and tact, guided the proceedings of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. We extend our congratulations as well to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has dedicated himself to the noble ideals of this Organization to which we all belong. We reiterate to him the total support of the delegation of Togo.

South Africa has returned from a long voyage. We have at last seen the death of apartheid. My country is proud to have contributed to reversing that odious system. Togo has always supported the legitimate aspirations of peoples oppressed the world over, but in particular the aspirations of the black majority of South Africa, whose fundamental rights, even the most elementary among them, were long trampled.

It is therefore with great joy that my country, recognizing the courage, dedication and sacrifice of the South African nation, welcomes the return to the United Nations of that fraternal country, which is now free and committed to waging — together with all the States Members of this Organization — the necessary fight for democracy and for the total independence of other peoples.

In 1995, our Organization will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. A new era of hope lies ahead for our nations.

Unfortunately that era of hope also contains concerns, disquiet at the increasing impoverishment of the poorest countries, concern too about a world constantly devastated by conflicts and difficulties of all types. The period of upheaval in which we live presents our Organization with a challenge — that of understanding all the major changes that are under way and of finding rapid solutions to the many problems confronting our planet.

It is therefore urgent to redefine the broad guidelines of the Organization on the basis of greater humanism on the global level, so that man can again regain the strength to better exercise his freedom, to enjoy it fully, to respect the laws of nature, and to break away from egoism and hard-heartedness. We must also lay new foundations for cooperation to help the United Nations not only to eliminate the consequences of the cold war, but also to solve the problems of today and those of tomorrow. This is the only way to respond to the expectations of our peoples and to respect the spirit of those who, 50 years ago, created our world Organization, with the purpose, among other things, of preventing conflicts for the peace of nations and the well-being of peoples. The implementation of the relevant recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, an Agenda for Peace, should, to this end, prompt us to focus our action, urgently, on preventive measures, to establish stable foundations for the harmonious development of society and to resolve its problems by developing flexible and appropriate mechanisms within the framework of the reforms now under way.

There are clear grounds for optimism when we see that the adversaries of yesterday have become the allies of today, seeking together peaceful and mutually advantageous solutions to the international problems of the day. We therefore have all the more reason to have faith in the future of our Organization. Planning for the future rather than waiting to be overtaken by events should be the watchword of our nations.

On the internal level, my country has undertaken to embark on the path of democracy based on a complete and responsible multiparty system in order to establish a State based on law and on respect for the individual.

Following the adoption of a new constitution in September 1992, presidential and legislative elections were held in August 1993 and in February 1994 respectively, leading to the establishment on 25 May last of a Government of national union whose programme of action aims basically at building a new Togo, democratic and free, at shaping national unity, at reconciling the people with itself, at rallying this people around its nation, its values and its flag, in peace and regained harmony, and at rebuilding an economy damaged under the combined effects of a range of factors both national and international.

Of course, all of this cannot be accomplished in just a few months; it takes time to overcome resentment, to reconcile the adversaries of the past, to establish the state of law to which all aspire, to rebuild confidence and to lay the foundations of a solid and prosperous economy.

In spite of the end of the cold war, we see disorder constantly blurring the geopolitical landscape. The situation now prevailing in Africa is hardly encouraging. The continent, marginalized, awakens only the minds of the most attentive observers, when, across mountains and valleys, they hear the cries of anguish and death. The cases of Rwanda, Angola, Liberia, Somalia and Mozambique suffice to illustrate this bitter fact.

Mr. Seniloli (Fiji), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The defeat of the system of apartheid in South Africa and the tragic events in Rwanda illustrate the two extremes in the evolution of the African continent, characterized by the contrast between hope and despair, progress and destruction. While, at the present time, South Africa seems to represent hope, Rwanda, on the contrary, symbolizes the face of an Africa mutilated and ravaged.

Togo appeals to the Government of Angola and to UNITA to show goodwill and the flexibility that is necessary if a speedy and comprehensive settlement of the question is to be achieved in the framework of the Lusaka talks.

In Liberia, despite a number of agreements, the disarmament of the factions has not yet occurred, and the general elections that it was hoped would take place seem to be becoming a mirage. Let us hope that good faith will find its way into the hearts of the parties concerned so that this fraternal country may regain the advantages of reconciliation and find again the path of development.

As for Somalia, Togo appeals to the international community not to grow weary and leave that country. We therefore invite the parties to the conflict to refrain from contributing to discouragement and to resume real dialogue aimed at the rapid establishment of reliable national institutions.

In respect of Western Sahara, my delegation supports the Secretary-General's report on the question and urges all the parties to cooperate fully with the United Nations to ensure that the referendum on self-determination, to be held in February 1995 for the purpose of deciding the future of the territory and its people, is organized effectively.

The Togolese Government is gratified at the recent positive development in the socio-political situation in Burundi and invites the new leaders to do all in their power to secure the definitive restoration of peace in that country.

Togo supports unreservedly the efforts of the Secretary-General and of the Security Council to bring peace to Mozambique. It invites the parties to commit themselves totally to accepting and respecting the results of the forthcoming general elections.

Faced with this situation of armed conflict, tension and insecurity, Africa must shoulder its responsibilities. It is through its own efforts that the African continent will be able to overcome the difficulties it faces today. This is the sense of the proposal that General Gnassinmgbé Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, made to the Tunis Summit of the Organization of African Unity in June 1994, when he advocated the creation of an African peace force whose mission would be to ensure peace where it is threatened by acting as a buffer between the belligerents and making possible a negotiated solution to conflicts. The delegation of Togo is delighted that this idea aroused a great deal of interest on the part of certain large Powers that are prepared to provide logistical support for such a buffer force.

The unprecedented positive development of the peace process in the Middle East, reflected over the past 12 months in the Israeli-Palestinian accord of September 1993 and in the historic Washington D.C. meeting of 25 July 1994 between His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel, opens up before us a horizon of hope. These encouraging developments are important steps in the direction of peace. They demonstrate clearly that disputes can be settled effectively only through peaceful means and that only resolute political will can help to build a peaceful society.

In total agreement with the initiators of and the protagonists at these gatherings, my country asks the United Nations, all Governments of the region and especially the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to continue the negotiations with a view to the establishment of a global, definitive and lasting peace in that part of the world to enable all States concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict to live henceforth within secure borders recognized by all, on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

As regards the future of the Palestinian people, the transition period, which is just beginning, must be sustained, not only politically but also, and above all, through financial, economic and technical assistance from the international community. The United Nations will therefore have to assume its responsibilities fully until the Palestinian question is definitively and satisfactorily resolved in all its aspects.

In the eastern part of Europe the situation is still constantly characterized by violence and by an explosion of nationalism. States have been dislocated, borders have been called into question, and dreams of annexation and of "ethnic cleansing" inspire and haunt both minds and hearts.

Drawing lessons, as is imperative, from all these tragedies and conflicts, the United Nations must promote and encourage further the use by States of the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. Of course, the Organization has in recent years clearly demonstrated its usefulness, especially in the fields of humanitarian affairs and the maintenance of peace. But sometimes lack of will to act promptly paralyses its action. This paralysis reveals profound shortcomings in the system of collective security provided for in the Charter and is due, above all, to the refusal of many Member States to commit themselves to peace, despite the special responsibilities entrusted to them by the Charter.

This being the case, it is clear that, as it makes decisions about the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should be broadened and, thereby, adapted to the changes in the world of today. Togo believes that the United Nations is the most appropriate forum for the creation of a new international order and the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as for the peaceful settlement of disputes. That is why we support its actions. We demonstrated this, *inter alia*, in the framework of peace-keeping operations by sending military contingents and police officers to Rwanda, Western Sahara and Mozambique to serve under the flag of the United Nations.

Profoundly committed to peace and to the principle of general and complete disarmament, Togo rejoices in the many positive developments that have taken place in this field over recent months But we remain concerned at the constantly increasing proliferation of conventional weapons. The massive international transfers of such weapons dangerously compromise the success of effective general disarmament. It has become urgent to strengthen the role and the capacity for action of the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament, which are at present poorly structured and lack both the material and the human resources they need to function properly and produce the results the international community expects of them.

The particularly alarming case of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, of which my country is honoured to be the headquarters, is quite illustrative, and should be examined with care. For, paradoxically, while the African continent is prey to violent and constant civil wars, which endanger regional and international peace and security, the Centre, which the United Nations could well have used to contribute to the quest for appropriate solutions to these conflicts, is, either by design or by circumstance, left out and its existence is almost ignored.

As regards the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula, my delegation welcomes the agreement recently reached between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. It also welcomes the readiness expressed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Togo views this courageous position adopted by the North Korean party as edifying testimony of its determination to maintain peace in the region.

The world economy continues to be characterized by trends toward stagnation and the growing disparity between North and South.

As we prepare to enter the third millennium, the elimination of poverty should be one of the main objectives of our Organization. In this context, the World Summit for Social Development, which the Government of Denmark has offered to host in March 1995 in Copenhagen, assumes its full importance. Togo fervently hopes that Member States will demonstrate political will and, in a surge of collective responsibility, give this Summit the attention necessary to obtain concrete results and practical decisions whose implementation should lead to the true elimination of poverty, the creation of genuinely productive jobs and the complete integration of marginalized or excluded sectors of society.

During the last 15 years, there have been many obstacles to growth in our countries, including the decline in foreign capital, the debt crisis, and the constant decline in public development assistance, whose level is clearly short of the target 0.7 per cent of gross national product that was set and strongly recommended by the United Nations. All of this leads to widespread poverty, aggravated by structural adjustment programmes that have insupportable social effects.

There has been constant regression in Africa's share of world trade. The recent Marrakesh agreements that resulted from long and difficult international negotiations in the Uruguay Round, far from meeting the expectations of the developing countries in general and of Africa in particular, are likely to lead to new imbalances in international trade which may require more than a decade to redress.

In this respect, my delegation views the Agenda for Development proposed to us by the Secretary-General as a timely initiative, offering as it does an opportunity to begin a process of constructive dialogue and political mobilization to create a true and just partnership that can engage in better consideration of development issues.

Together with the Group of 77 and China, Togo strongly supports the idea that this Agenda should build an international consensus for the global liberalization of trade, on the one hand as an effective means for international cooperation for development, and on the other to give new impetus to the efforts made over the last decade to avoid protectionist policies.

If the transition of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade into the World Trade Organization is to be smooth, there must be a mechanism that can compensate the developing countries affected by the new system. Along these lines, the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, adopted by the General Assembly in 1991, and the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted in 1990, should, in our opinion, be geared to an increase in the volume of official development assistance, the promotion of respect for commitments that have been undertaken for new and additional resources for international cooperation, and a greater lightening of the debt burden, or even its cancellation. It would be desirable to adopt policies that ensured an adequate flow of concessional financing to the developing countries, in particular to the least developed among them; stimulated other flows of capital, including direct investment; reversed the negative trend in financial flows, and created mechanisms and allocated resources related to development.

It can never be overemphasized that sustainable development is a prerequisite to lasting peace. The right to development must be considered, henceforth, as a fundamental human right, and thus be given priority attention by the international community. Along these lines, my Government hopes that, in addition to the results of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September last, the work of the World Summit for Social Development, of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September 1995, and of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II), to be held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, will help produce at the international level a spirit of shared responsibility and the necessary political will to mobilize the resources that are indispensable if our developing countries are to thrive.

Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration are an important bridge on the road to sustainable development and to the protection of the Earth from the dangers facing it. That is why, two years ago, all the participants in the Conference showed such enthusiasm and sincerity. Regrettably, the results of that historic summit have still not been reflected in concrete facts. No notable progress has yet been observed in the implementation of the recommendations contained, in particular, in the Programme of Action. It is high time that States and the international community did everything in their power, at the national, regional and international levels, to put into effect the commitments to sustainable development undertaken in Rio.

The Togolese Government welcomes the entry into force of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and is particularly delighted at the conclusion of another legal instrument of global scope: the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. The Convention was adopted by the intergovernmental negotiating Committee in Paris in June 1994. Togo was pleased to take part in the negotiating process and will soon take up the procedures for signature and ratification. We invite all States Members of the United Nations to do likewise in order that the Convention and related instruments may enter into force as soon as possible.

Considering the uncertain future of mankind and the numerous and formidable challenges confronting the human race, it is imperative that we become clearly aware of our moral obligations. As of this moment it is essential to identify and correct the weaknesses and failings of our Organization. The reforms under way are indispensable, but they must not become a means of conferring even greater influence than in the past on the large countries and richest Powers in the world. Our new awareness must also help define ways of establishing relations among nations in the future, and in dealing with our present-day concerns we must take into account the causes of the disparities in standards of living between North and South. There is no effect without a cause, and to deny the principle of causality amounts to deferring our problems and never solving them.

Only an attitude based on action, justice and international solidarity can spare the world a conflict that would otherwise, sooner or later, be inevitable. Thus, tackling the deep-rooted causes of today's problems means seeking together the solutions that will make it possible for men, women and children to live decently and in complete freedom, without fear of being crushed by unemployment, poverty and hunger. This would also make it possible to protect the dignity of the human person and to safeguard human security.

Tomorrow we should have a world in which all nations and all citizens refuse to listen to the voice of their own personal interests when they run counter to the common weal, a world in which nations and peoples find satisfaction not only in that which is to their own advantage but also in that which is to everyone's advantage.

At its forty-ninth session, may the General Assembly, under the leadership of its President, contribute to dispelling our concerns and to defining the ways and means of helping us blaze the way into the future. This is my delegation's most fervent hope.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, His Excellency the Honourable Paul Robertson.

Mr. Robertson (Jamaica): May I, on behalf of the Government and the people of Jamaica, convey warmest congratulations to Mr. Amara Essy on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I wish to assure him of the full support and cooperation of the Jamaican delegation in the deliberations on the many important issues before the Assembly.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Insanally of Guyana on the skilful and innovative manner in which he presided over the forty-eighth session. We in the Caribbean are justifiably proud of his contributions to the Assembly's deliberations.

Last year I emphasized that the international community was at a crossroads where we were faced not only with matters of economic progress but also with an environment full of conflicts and strife. My outlook was, and still is, one of optimism, an optimism rooted in the recognition that the old political and military order has passed and that history has, for the second time in less than two generations, provided us with the opportunity to embark on a process of international consensus-building. This is an exciting and daunting task, particularly for a small island State like Jamaica, whose faith and commitment to multilateralism and the United Nations remain unwavering.

Our most pressing collective challenge is to make this Organization a more effective instrument for peace and development. The United Nations is being called upon to respond to a host of new challenges, including emergency humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping, peacemaking, development and post-conflict rebuilding. The past year has seen human misery and dislocation of fearful proportions in Haiti, on the high seas of the Caribbean, in Rwanda, in the refugee camps of Zaire and Tanzania, in Bosnia and in Afghanistan. Their underlying causes are political, social and economic. The United Nations can and should bring to these and other situations a broadly encompassing view of the indivisibility of political, economic and social processes.

The Organization and its resources and the will and vision of its Members must be mobilized to address the imperatives of social and economic development. We must seek to promote a new era of international cooperation for global human security.

The global nature of this challenge is inescapable. It has become evident that no State by itself can control the spread of environmental degradation and pollution, transnational migrations and diseases such the AIDS epidemic. Economic globalization and the accompanying liberalization of trade and financial flows, now link developed and developing economies, North and South, East and West. Global solutions and coordinated strategies must consequently form the basis of our actions.

Globalization brings new opportunities, but it also brings new dangers. Despite the general trend towards improved economic management, economic disparities are widening. Developing countries are being marginalized from the growth trends in the international economy. This is a matter of concern to Jamaica as we, like a large number of other developing countries, have placed high developmental priority on export-led growth and on attracting investment flows. Structural adjustment programmes have also been undertaken at great social cost. The contributions of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in areas such as institution-building, poverty alleviation, productivity enhancement, small enterprise development and financing, and the strengthening of human resources, continue to be vital elements in enhancing the productive potential of developing countries. This will, in turn, enable our countries to benefit more fully from and to participate more effectively in a liberal and increasingly organic global economy.

The United Nations must now work vigorously towards the implementation of an agenda for development. A meaningful agenda for development must set priorities in programmes and resources that respond to the challenges posed by the international environment for developing countries. These priorities must address all issues to which adequate multilateral solutions have yet to be found. These include the burden of debt; inadequate flows of official development assistance; the debilitating brain drain; the reverse transfer of resources to multilateral financial institutions; the social costs of structural adjustment and the non-transparent trade barriers and protectionist measures that remain in place in industrialized countries against the products of developing countries even as the general trend towards liberalization and trade in goods and services is accelerating. The agenda must strengthen the role of the United Nations in the area of international economic policy-making and coordination. It must seek to enhance the relationship of the United Nations with the Bretton Woods institutions.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the two Bretton Woods institutions established under the umbrella of the United Nations. I wish to emphasize that we should continue to examine the roles and policies of these institutions. We must make the changes that five decades of experience indicate are necessary so as to improve the prospects for growth and development of developing countries — change which can be carried out without undermining the health and vitality of the international economy or the fiscal integrity of these institutions. Major developed countries should re-examine their opposition to the sound proposals for change that have been put forward repeatedly by developing countries — proposals that range from increasing international liquidity to longer adjustment periods. Over the years, the International Monetary Fund has moved from the supervision of a fixed exchange rate system to assisting developing countries through financial crises, while the World Bank has made the transition from post-war reconstruction to funding development in the third world. Now is an opportune time to reassess their respective roles, given new global dynamics and changing patterns of trade and investment. The Fund and the Bank need to quickly adapt to the current global economic system if they are to remain relevant to contemporary realities.

Two important conferences were held this year which offered opportunities for international attention and action. In Barbados, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States adopted a programme of action which now requires the support and assistance of the United Nations system and the donor community for its speedy and effective implementation. The recently concluded International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo produced a landmark document highlighting the inextricable linkage between population, sustained economic growth and sustained development. Next year in Copenhagen, the World Summit for Social Development will endeavour to adopt a global approach to the eradication of poverty, the generation of productive employment and the enhancement of social integration. We will also meet in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women to continue to put in place measures which will create an enabling environment for women. Jamaica will actively participate in these important processes.

I have chosen to focus at the outset on what Jamaica sees as the development imperative and priorities of the United Nations because we are convinced that the path to development and the path to peace are one and the same. Jamaica fully supports an open, non-discriminatory trading system governed by transparent rules and with an effective mechanism for settling disputes. We therefore await the implementation of the conclusions of the Uruguay Round and the establishment of the World Trade Organization. We will work actively within the new organization to ensure the promotion of development through trade, placing special importance on those provisions in the conclusions of the Uruguay Round which seek to ensure a regime of fairness and equity in the overall context of a programme of free trade.

The international community and its institutions are dynamic. The choice is whether we actively shape the change that inevitably comes with the passing of time and with new circumstances, or whether we merely react to events. The World Trade Organization is an example of purposeful design by the international community. Yet another — a truly historic one — is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. As is widely known, the Convention, which establishes a regulatory mechanism for the oceans, the seas and their resources, will enter into force on 16 November of this year. The inaugural meeting of the International Seabed Authority will be held in Kingston on that date. This will be both an end and a beginning. The event will mark the end of a process that began nearly twenty years ago and the opening of a new and historic chapter in international juridical and economic relations.

The inaugural meeting will see the establishment of the International Seabed Authority. We are extremely proud that Jamaica will host this important organization, which has responsibility for regulating and exploiting the world's vastest resource base. It must be emphasized, however, that the success of the Authority will require the cooperation of all parties concerned, in order to ensure that the goal of universality is achieved. It is important that the Authority receive the necessary resources to enable it to operate effectively, in a way consistent with principles and practices applied to institutions within the United Nations system.

I wish again to pay tribute to those who have contributed to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to its ratification and to the establishment of the International Seabed Authority.

We invite all States to join in the momentous first meeting of the Authority in Kingston from 16 to 18 November. We look forward to welcoming the Secretary-General of this Organization, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has graciously accepted the invitation of the Government of Jamaica to be at the inaugural meeting.

Since I spoke to this body last year, the Republic of South Africa has resumed its seat in the General Assembly. The installation of a majority government in that country, under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela, is a historic development of which the entire international community is justifiably proud. The dismantling of apartheid was a consequence of the long and valiant struggle waged by the South African people. It was also a victory for multilateralism and an important reminder of the critical role that multilateral organizations such as the United Nations can play in resolving difficult international issues. The Government and the people of Jamaica welcome a non-racial, democratic South Africa into the international community of nations.

In our own region, the situation in Haiti has been of great concern to Jamaica and our Caribbean Community (CARICOM) partners. The wanton abuse of human rights that led to the death of Haitians within Haiti and of many of those who fled in unsafe vessels simply had to stop.

We welcome the most recent developments in Haiti and the reaffirmation by the international community of its commitment to the Governors Island Accord. There can be no deviation from the critical elements to which we subscribed. The recent Security Council resolution sends a strong signal to the military authorities that the international community will accept no less than the prompt return of the legitimately elected President, the restoration of the constitutional authority of the Government of Haiti, the reform of the army and the police force, and the building of lasting democratic institutions. Jamaica, along with several of our CARICOM partners, is playing its part in this process by participating in the multinational force and in the United Nations Mission in Haiti.

Developments in Haiti have underscored the wisdom of the philosophy of the countries of the Caribbean that maintaining peace and stability, within the context of democratic institutions and practices, must be the fundamental basis for the development of our region. Within the wider Latin American and Caribbean region, we are actively strengthening and widening cooperation among our countries. The establishment of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) in July of this year was a historic development that provides for even stronger collaboration and cooperation.

We hope that in the interest of the entire region, a process of sustained dialogue and accommodation between Cuba and the United States can be initiated, and that this will lead to conditions that permit the eventual full reintegration of Cuba into the region and into the hemispheric community. Jamaica welcomes the call made by the Rio Group at its recent Eighth Summit meeting for the lifting of the trade embargo against Cuba.

The trade and economic prospects of countries in the region can be strengthened only by the priority now being accorded to regional and hemispheric relations and by the growing role, actual wand envisioned, for regional and subregional organizations, such as CARICOM and the newly established ACS, as well as by arrangements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In the case of NAFTA, which we support strongly, Jamaica and other participants in the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) programme continue to press for the adoption, by the United States Congress of the Interim Trade programme, which would significantly offset adverse consequences on existing conditions of access under the CBI.

I feel compelled to return in these final comments to the mission of this Organization — peace and development. There can be little cause for comfort when, since 1945, 20 million people have died in wars and other conflicts. It is disturbing and instructive to learn that some 80 million persons now live in foreign lands, and that a million persons immigrate permanently each year, while another million seek political asylum as they flee both poverty and internal strife. The increasing flows of refugees and displaced persons worldwide threaten peace and stability and exacerbate tensions and conflicts between countries and in entire regions. We must strengthen international cooperation in this area and streamline national and international procedures for dealing with this grave problem.

To be true to its mission, the United Nations must be an Organization that reduces both want and war. This is why I underscored earlier my delegation's strong belief that this Organization must become increasingly active in the promotion of long-term development, which is the necessary underpinning of a genuine and lasting peace. The United Nations must not shrink from this aspect of its mission.

The military and ideological realignment of recent years has created new opportunities for peace. But these unprecedented developments must be supported by institutional reforms and by new approaches on our part. These institutional reforms must inevitably include the reform of the Security Council, the principal organ charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. In this regard, Jamaica fully supports the call for its enlargement. We believe that the Security Council must be truly representative in order to be fully effective.

Expenditure on armaments continues to consume resources and to divert spending away from human development needs in both developed and developing countries. Military downsizing, particularly by developing countries, has yet to gather the momentum that was expected at the end of the cold war. The United Nations has a legitimate role to play in providing technical and other assistance to help developing and other countries shift human and material resources from military to civilian use. We note that the permanent members of the Security Council are also the world's leading exporters of conventional weapons. This is an issue that should be addressed both in terms of reducing arms exports, as well as in terms of converting the resources to the requirements of peace and development.

It would be remiss of me if I concluded my contribution to this debate without referring to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, to be celebrated next year. As we all prepare for this historic occasion, we must reflect on the fact that this achievement is in itself a vindication of the principles on which the Organization was founded. If we are to survive beyond that milestone we must remain steadfast to these principles.

The President: I now call on the Secretary of State for Foreign and Political Affairs of the Republic of San Marino, His Excellency Mr. Gabriele Gatti.

Mr. Gatti (San Marino) *(spoke in Italian; English text furnished by the delegation):* I wonder how historians will judge the last decade of this century, and what future generations will read about these years. My opinion is that we are experiencing an exciting period of arduous challenges and great expectations for peace.

The installation of the administration of the Palestinian National Authority in Jericho gave us strong hope for a peaceful future.

The excessive crises and wars that have recently and suddenly broken out and the revival and intensification of old ones in too many parts of our planet call for the involvement and intervention of the international community. Let me also stress that not only should such intervention be firm, but it should also be legitimate and correct. In the effort to restore peace, the international community should act fairly, respecting the legitimate reasons and opposing the illegitimate ones, with all due regard for man and human dignity.

From the top of our Mount Titano, on a clear day, one can see the coast of the former Yugoslavia. In the fourth century, San Marino's founder fled from that coast to escape religious persecution.

Now, in this forum, on behalf of the people of San Marino, I launch an appeal for peace for those tormented regions, for Sarajevo, and for the recognition of the equal rights of all human beings, without distinction of any kind, as well as for the dignity of those deprived of their right to life.

The public response to the important Conference on Population and Development, which brought representatives of many countries to Cairo in an effort to solve some of the problems hindering the fair and balanced development of all peoples, has now faded away. The decisions taken during that Conference, whose aims have been distorted and misinterpreted, are only a small step forward. However, it is encouraging to see how it has been generally recognized that our common concerns cannot and must not lie only in a necessary reduction of rapid population growth. All the problems related to this issue must be addressed, thus ensuring all people's rights to existence, to good health and free development, and the disposal of their resources as they see fit.

The Republic of San Marino participated in the Conference, which was held in Egypt, prompted by the conviction that it was its duty to offer a contribution. My fellow citizens are well aware that a small country like ours will never be in a position to play a substantial role in the choices to be made and the decisions to be taken. Nevertheless, our foreign policy is clear, and reflects our deep-rooted historical traditions.

Mr. Vilchez Asher (Nicaragua), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In line with the policy adopted, we feel compelled to call for respect for human rights and dignity. The latter implies the right to make free choices, the right to development, to democratic progress, equality, equal opportunities, and the right to live in peace.

It seems that the United Nations has given to the Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing conferences the task of outlining a feasible solution to all the problems related to social development and the status of women.

It is clear that in declaring 1994 the International Year of the Family the General Assembly made a precise and well-considered choice. By this decision the Assembly's aim was to celebrate an essential part of society, in the conviction that the family, the smallest democracy at the centre of society, is the first and most important element of any country's structure and deserves special attention by all States. In a national and international context characterized by a disquieting crisis of values, by increasing economic and social difficulties and by a growing lack of models for young people, the family, with its various historical, cultural and religious components, represents the last hope for mankind.

Against this background, all Governments have the primary task of formulating policies capable of helping and supporting the family and its components while respecting its autonomy and specific features. The Republic of San Marino considers all family issues to be of the utmost importance, and it has recently taken new measures for the protection of motherhood and fatherhood, in addition to the laws already in force. The widespread development we all hope to achieve has its roots in the family, in respect for it and within it, and means in practice gender equality and equal dignity between men and women.

On the other hand, development and its equitable distribution can be obtained only if our projects include the safeguarding of the environment. It is a notorious fact that too often protection of the natural environment is sacrificed for economic and national reasons that damage the interests of other people and the common well-being. The richest and most industrialized countries are regularly destroying the natural environment inside and outside their borders.

Therefore, we deemed it necessary and fair to include the environment, along with peace, economic growth, social justice and democracy, as items on the Agenda for Development — the project proposed by the Secretary-General for the solution of the problems that will face our planet within the next century.

In my country especially, where the protection of the territory is of basic importance because of its small size, public opinion in general and young people in particular are extremely sensitive to environmental issues and ask that choices be made that respect the interests of the community and the individual in a spirit of true solidarity. In San Marino we have created the Foundation for the Environment, with very ambitious programmes, and we hope in the future to have the cooperation and support of the United Nations.

We all share the opinion that economic development goes hand in hand with social development. Therefore, it is high time for all States to adopt appropriate social policies and develop structures in support of the poorest and weakest groups of the population. Unfortunately, unemployment, poverty, the absence of economic security for the elderly, and exploitation of labour are still a very sad, indeed tragic, reality.

My appeal to the world for solidarity is not just rhetorical. Solidarity is not only spiritual sharing but also, and above all, the substantial support offered by the rich countries to the poor ones, the solidarity of the upper classes with the lower classes, and even distribution of welfare, equal rights and opportunities. Solidarity not only means substantial aid but also implies tolerance, a noble feeling but one that is hard to achieve.

We are still witnessing with amazement shameful anti-Semitic, xenophobic and racist attitudes, showing that a culture of tolerance, dialogue and respect has still to be developed at all levels. The concept seems to me to be very simple: all men are equal and no one can claim to be superior. However, respect for others seems to be difficult to achieve, since it cannot be imposed by law or by a Government decision. This ambitious goal can be attained only through an educational process even if a long-lasting one — that involves future generations and calls upon national and supranational institutions to carry out their own responsibilities.

The United Nations is surely in a position to meet these challenges and to offer the right and appropriate solutions to the States. The role played by the United Nations as it approaches its fiftieth anniversary — an event we are about to celebrate — confirms all that.

International peace and security, the solution of many domestic crises, the settlement of disputes, the beginning of social and economic development, respect for human rights, humanitarian help, decolonization and other legal rules in international relations are all fields in which the United Nations is working. However, continuous attention to all the achievements of the United Nations is needed.

The Organization, by adapting its structure to new circumstances and needs, will be able to offer a stronger commitment and to be the authoritative and dynamic guide the world needs for the future.

Furthermore, San Marino gives particular importance to a reform of the Security Council that will lead to an equitable distribution of its seats and to a greater transparency in its work. The proper functioning of the Security Council, its close and coordinated relationship with the General Assembly, and the widest possible representation are the best guarantees that the United Nations will be able to carry out its tasks.

In this context I believe it is appropriate to remember that small States, willing and capable of making a contribution must enjoy equal rights and dignity, since both the big Powers and the various small communities are interested in the peaceful future of the world, in the establishment of democracy and in the strengthening of freedom.

More than 50 years ago, in June 1944, the world conflict brought death and ruin even to the neutral mountain of San Marino, which had no part in the conflict and where thousands of poor refugees, deprived of everything except their lives, had sought shelter. The appeal for peace launched almost 50 years ago by the signatories of the San Francisco Charter is still dramatically up to date. Some might think that a peaceful world is a mere Utopia, and they might be right. But I am firmly convinced that everyone must contribute to the achievement of this wonderful Utopia.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Tariq Aziz.

Mr. Aziz (Iraq) *(interpretation from Arabic):* I should like to convey to Mr. Essy of Côte d'Ivoire our sincere congratulations on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am certain that his experience will be a positive factor in ensuring the success of the session's deliberations.

Iraq is one of the founding Members of the United Nations. Over the past five decades it has taken an active part in all the Organization's activities, has cooperated effectively with its various organs and has contributed generously when it was able to do so. Iraq has also adhered to the decisions of the Organization in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Charter.

At the international level, Iraq has participated actively and responsibly in the Movement of Non-aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States. During the 1970s it provided assistance and soft loans amounting to about $10 billion to developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin and Central America. Iraq has called for justice in political and economic relations and has affirmed the need to respect international law. These positions of Iraq are known to all.

What now concerns my country is the nature of the current stage of the relationship between Iraq and the Security Council, which is based on the Council's resolution 687 (1991), adopted in April of that year. That resolution, which imposed a number of obligations on Iraq, has no precedent among United Nations resolutions throughout the history of the Organization. This is how it is seen today in international circles, both legal and political. However, despite its cruel and extraordinary nature, Iraq informed the Security Council that it was ready to comply with it within the requirements laid down by the Charter's provisions regarding resolutions adopted under Chapter VII.

Since that date, despite the harsh conditions obtaining in our country as a result of the total war waged by the most powerful States of the world — a war in which more than 100,000 tons of explosives were dumped on civilian utilities throughout the country — and despite the effects of the comprehensive and harsh embargo, Iraq has striven to implement the resolution.

In March 1992 — less than a year after the adoption of the resolution — and in November of the same year we came to the Security Council to explain the substantial and serious steps that had been taken by Iraq in the process of implementing its provisions. On both occasions, we requested that positive and fair consideration be given to what had been achieved and that steps be taken towards easing the comprehensive blockade imposed upon Iraq in accordance with the terms of the resolution and, specifically, the unbearable suffering of the 20 million people of Iraq. However, our requests were not heeded.

In the middle of 1993 Iraq's relationship with the Special Commission and with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) saw a breakthrough in the field of positive and constructive cooperation with a view to completing the implementation of part C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) — the provisions relating to proscribed weapons, which the resolution legally ties to the lifting of the embargo on oil exports.

In the process of this cooperation — on 26 November 1993 — we presented our official letter concerning compliance with Security Council resolution 715 (1991). The letter dealt with the monitoring of weapons. This was done after we had been assured that Iraq's official acknowledgment of compliance represented the most expeditious means of securing the application of paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991). This clear and categorical assurance is referred to in the report issued as document S/26571 on 12 October 1993. However, what we were told would be done has not been done.

During the past 11 months we have witnessed transparent tactics to delay and obstruct. These have taken various forms. Their purpose is to delay indefinitely the lifting of the embargo. In spite of the official acknowledgment by the Special Commission and the IAEA of the relevant Iraqi authorities' continuing cooperation, as well as the notable achievements of completion of the work required by those bodies over a period of more than a year, we still confront deliberate ambiguity with regard to the Security Council's discharge its obligations under paragraph 22, which permits the export of Iraqi products and commodities, including oil.

The blockade imposed on Iraq represents the most comprehensive regime ever imposed by the Security Council in all its history. With the exception of food and medicine, it includes everything and affects all aspects of life. As a result of the freezing of Iraqi assets in foreign banks, Iraq is denied all the financial resources that would enable it to pay for the food and medicines its people need. This has rendered practically redundant the exceptions relating to food and medicines.

In addition, the Sanctions Committee, which the Security Council entrusted with the task of authorizing the importation of material to Iraq, agreed on the consensus method of making decisions. However, the reality is exactly the opposite: decisions are required to be unanimous.

It is sufficient for the objection of one member to frustrate any request for imports. It is worth noting that only three of the members of the Committee have been the source of constant objections on the vast majority of the import requests relating to the provision of humanitarian civilian needs. What has made the situation in the Sanctions Committee even worse is that it proceeds on the basis of procedures which do not recognize precedents and deals with each case individually. This has led to confusion, disorder and ambiguity in the work of the Committee in regard to what is permitted, both in relation to quantity and quality. It is not difficult to see, therefore, the harmful negative consequences of this method of work by the Committee on the flow of humanitarian goods, which are of a limited quantity anyway.

Let me refer to some glaring examples. The Sanctions Committee refused on numerous occasions to permit the importation of shrouds, pencils, cloth of all kinds including the type used for hospital bed sheets, threads of all kinds, paper for printing school books, leather, car tires including used tires, nails; the list is long and it is well documented in the records of the Committee.

This situation makes it incumbent upon the international community to reflect upon the philosophy of the sanctions regime of within the Charter of the United Nations. Is that regime a means to an end or is it an end in itself? Further, what is the nature of that regime? Is it punitive, or is it a series of procedures designed to achieve the purposes of the Charter irrespective of the unilateral goals and whims of foreign policies of Member States? It is well known to all that the sanctions regime under the Charter is nothing but a series of procedures adopted to achieve certain results that lead in turn to the achievement of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and that such procedures should end with the cessation of their causes. What then is the state of correct application of these procedures following all the cooperation and progress achieved in complying with the resolutions of the Security Council by Iraq? What is clear to us is that the application of sanctions and the embargo in the manner described against Iraq is a process of vengeance, a process aimed at depriving the people of Iraq, a nation of with great history, a nation which has contributed immensely to human civilization, depriving it of the simplest requirements of human life.

The reports of the relevant specialized agencies indicate the continuing deterioration of living conditions of the Iraqi citizens. The Iraqi Government makes available to every citizen a limited rations of flour, rice, tea, cooking oil, soap, baby formula and whatever other items might be available. This share is however to meet the basic nutritional needs of human beings. Of late, we have been forced to reduce this ration due to the lack of financial resources and as well as poor agricultural output resulting from the embargo. Consequently, the largest number of citizens cannot buy what they lack of these and other items because of the high prices, especially for protein items, and they are therefore suffering from malnutrition. This situation has affected the physical wellbeing of the individual citizen in Iraq.

Despite the efforts of the Government to support and develop the agricultural sector, great difficulties continue to be faced due to the embargo. For example, the lack of pesticides, insecticides, agricultural machinery and equipment, water pumps and fertilizers. We do not have the financial means to offset these shortages; and when we do have some financial resources, the Sanctions Committee promptly obstructs their importation.

The Joint Mission of the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Food Programme, which visited Iraq in June 1993, did indicate in its Special Alert No. 237 (1993) the magnitude of the danger resulting from the blockade on the agricultural capabilities of Iraq, which caused the loss of food-security and generated persistent deprivation, chronic hunger and endemic malnutrition among the vast majority of the population. The third FAO Special Report of May 1994 dealt with the grave problems of providing food and crops in Iraq due to the shortages of agricultural requirements. The same Report noted that these problems cannot be solved by the provision of food aid and that the permanent solution to the present food crisis lies in reviving the Iraqi economy which cannot be achieved without resuming the activity of international trade. It is also indicated that the rationing system used by the Iraqi Government, though very successful, provides only about one-half of the average caloric intake which used to be available to the citizens of Iraq before the imposition of the sanctions.

In the public health sector, health services have deteriorated, after they had been amongst the relatively advanced in the world. Due to shortages of medicine and the deterioration of medical equipment, cases of death have reached 384,022 cases from August 1990 to March 1994. The cases of death among infants have also increased and now reach 126 cases per 100,000 live births whereas it had been only 32 per thousand in the period 1985 to 1990.

There are those who claim that the Government of Iraq is the party responsible for not making available food, medicine and essential civilian needs to the people because it has refused to accept Security Council resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991). Such allegations are mere falsifications.

Fair and objective consideration of the full picture of the arrangements adopted in these two resolutions would lead one to the conclusion that they do represent a political programme aimed at violating the sovereignty of Iraq, interfering in its internal affairs and dividing its people along ethnic and sectarian lines, rather than ensuring the satisfying of humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq. Through five rounds of talks with the Secretariat in Vienna and New York in 1992 and 1993 we have sought to reach acceptable modalities through sound arrangements in order to ensure the satisfaction of the humanitarian civilian needs of our people. However, despite the sustained efforts that have been made, such efforts have failed to reach an appropriate solution, a solution free of the objectives of the biased political programme through the pressures brought to bear by the United States. One of the major ironies during those talks was that the oil and banking experts who were part of the United Nations delegation did acknowledge that the arrangements adopted in the two said resolutions were not at all customary in the oil and banking fields.

Could it be deemed reasonable by anyone involved in the oil industry that the signing of an oil-export contract should require no less than 30 procedural steps? Do Members realize that the banking arrangements stipulated by the two resolutions totally ignore the existence of a developed banking sector in Iraq? Do Members realize that a simple contract for the importation of food or medicine requires no fewer than 20 bureaucratic steps in order for those goods to reach Iraq, and that even after their arrival they are subject to monitoring by hundreds of United Nations monitors from the time they leave the Iraqi border until they reach the consumer? This is the true story of resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991). Those two resolutions were never intended to meet the humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq.

In the course of the Security Council's periodic reviews, which take place every 60 days and the latest of which took place on 14 September last, the United States falsely accused Iraq on various counts in order to justify its position of delaying the lifting of sanctions indefinitely. We find it useful to refer to some examples of these accusations so that the General Assembly may see the picture clearly.

The United States charges that Iraq's cooperation with the Security Council has been sporadic, selective and opportunistic. This is a baseless accusation. It is well known that Iraq agreed to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and sought persistently to implement their provisions correctly and legally. We believe that the majority of the members of the Security Council do not join the United States in its accusation.

The United States also charges that Iraq's record with respect to the implementation of its obligations in the area of proscribed weapons was a partial and grudging acquiescence to United Nations demands. The facts, however, prove otherwise. This is made clear in the reports of the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency, especially those issued since July 1993. The latest of those reports, circulated in document S/1994/860, states,

> "The Special Commission and the IAEA noted with appreciation the constructive cooperation received from Iraq and the efforts made by the competent Iraqi authorities in the conduct of their tasks." *(S/1994/860, para. 6)*

Another accusation is that the Government of Iraq cut off electricity from certain areas in the northern Iraqi Governorates. Those who make this accusation ignore the fact that the comprehensive embargo imposed upon Iraq does not make sufficient financial resources available to the Government to import spare parts and equipment for ensuring the maintenance of electrical service in the country. Moreover, the accusers are the very ones who constantly object in the sanctions Committee to Iraqi requests for importing material with which to maintain the electricity grid, in the event we have some resources available to that end.

The United States also accuses the Government of Iraq of draining the marshes in the southern part of the country in pursuit of a political programme aimed against the population of the area. According to the allegation, this action destroys their cultural heritage and causes harm to the environment. I say that this accusation, like the others, is baseless. It is utterly at odds with the sense of objectivity expected of a permanent member of the Security Council.

The truth is that the Government of Iraq carried out extensive irrigation projects in the southern part of the country, including the area of the marshes, in order to reduce salinity in the water and soil, which is a problem in central and southern Iraq, thereby increasing the amount of arable land. The planning for these projects goes back to the days of the Rehabilitation Board in the fifties. American, British, French, German, Dutch, Russian and Canadian companies and consultants participated in drawing up and revising the plans and, in part, in their implementation.

After the imposition of the comprehensive blockade the competent Iraqi authorities completed the projects by themselves. One of the ironies of the situation is that the principal proponent of draining the marshes of southern Iraq in the fifties was an American expert working for the Iraqi Board. It is also ironic that one of the rivers in the area is still called the Dutch River because a Dutch company carried out a project there.

I have been prompted to mention some of the accusations levelled at Iraq in order to shed light on the real situation and the fabrications and falsifications used as pretexts to prolong the iniquitous blockade against us. But it is even more important to refer to some glaring examples of the conduct of those who accuse us, to wit, the United States of America.

The United States the State that is so concerned with respect for Security Council resolutions, imposes two no-fly zones in the north and the south of Iraq without any authorization from the Security Council or any legitimate justification under international law. The United States Administration, which pretends to be so concerned over the rights of the Kurds in Iraq, was the very party that prevented the leaders of the Kurds from honouring an agreement that, after four months of dialogue, was freely entered into with the Government of Iraq in 1991. The United States Administration stated openly that that agreement would have strengthened the authority of the present national Government in Iraq, which was contrary to the United States objective of changing that Government.

Is this attitude in harmony with the Security Council resolutions that provide for respect of sovereignty and the achievement of international peace and security and stability in the region? Is it acceptable, under the resolutions of the Security Council, for that Administration to obstruct the operation of flights transporting pilgrims from a friendly Muslim State to Iraq's sacred religious shrines under the pretext that a number of politicians from that State were among the pilgrims? That very Administration also obstructed, under flimsy pretexts, the aerial shipment of meat from the Sudan to Iraq.

Lastly in this connection, I should like to affirm that Iraq expressed, in the words of its leader, President Saddam Hussein, its sincere desire to turn a new leaf with its neighbouring Arab countries in order to establish relations based on the Charter of the League of Arab States, the Charter of the United Nations and on the basis of mutual respect for one another's sovereignty and regard for each other's interests. However, it is well known to all that the United States Administration is the party that obstructs those efforts and brings pressure to bear on the States of the region to prevent dialogue with Iraq. The article by United States Secretary of State Warren Christopher published in *The New York Times* last April is, we believe, the most telling evidence in that respect.

Despite the harshness of the Security Council's resolutions concerning Iraq, we have implemented many of their provisions fully. We are legally and correctly continuing with the implementation of whatever provisions remain in the relevant resolutions. Within this process, we are also prepared to satisfy and allay the concerns of the members of the Security Council of which we have become aware in our contacts, although some of them have been introduced in legally irrelevant contexts.

In the meantime, however, we wonder: is it the duty of the State in question under the Charter to implement the provisions of the Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII, without expecting any counter-obligations from the Council to implement the same provisions? The just, legal view is that resolutions of the Council adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter are binding upon the State in question and all other States, particularly the members of the Security Council, and even more particularly the Permanent Members of the Security Council. This, undoubtedly, is the rule of the Charter. It is therefore a foregone conclusion that the members of the Security Council, and especially its Permanent Members, should be keener than any other to abide by the resolutions they themselves adopt. However, the facts of the situation now are that one Permanent Member, namely the United States of America, is persistently obstructing any steps towards the correct legal application of the resolutions of the Council, particularly those provisions relating to the lifting of sanctions from Iraq, and is conducting itself on the basis of biased political motives that bear no relation to either the resolutions of the Council or the Charter.

The General Assembly is the general organ entrusted with deliberating on the world Organization as a whole under the Charter. Under the Charter, Member States have conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and have agreed that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility, the Security Council acts on their behalf, in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter. Consequently, under the Charter, the members of the Security Council, both individually and collectively, bear the joint responsibility of the membership of the Organization. The collectivity of membership, as represented by the General Assembly, does not, on the basis of the delegation of power, lose the right to seek, through all available means, the correction of any failure that might arise in performing that responsibility.

Proceeding from this, we request that the members of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the international community as a whole look into the iniquitous and illegitimate situation in which one or two Permanent Members obstruct the correct legal application of the resolutions of the Security Council and consequently continue to impose upon the Iraqi people, a nation of ancient history, cruel suffering afflicting all aspects of human life.

It is within Iraq's right to demand strongly that this iniquitous and illegitimate situation be changed as soon as possible and to seek full clarification of the position of the Security Council on its just demands.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Petros Solomon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea.

Mr. Solomon (Eritrea): At the outset I wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his election as the President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that he will guide our deliberations with wisdom and skill.

Permit me also to rejoice with the people of South Africa, who have at long last eradicated apartheid and created a plural society in which all citizens of South Africa shall live in harmony, freedom and equality, irrespective of their ethnic, religious or class backgrounds. Their victory is a victory of good over evil and a tribute to the concept of unity in diversity, as well as a unique example of the concerted, unremitting and successful struggle of humanity against a pernicious assault on human dignity and nobility.

We are also happy to note that in the Middle East age-old adversaries have come close enough to resolve some of the most intractable problems of our time by negotiations based on understanding and the accommodation of the interests of all parties. We welcome the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as well as subsequent agreements reached between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We hope that this initial move, whose momentum must be maintained, will augur well for a comprehensive, permanent and enduring peace in the region as a whole.

We have now entered a new era of renewed hope. As the United Nations approaches its golden jubilee, it has become increasingly evident that the majority of the nations and peoples of the world believe that the world Organization is essential and are reposing renewed hope and confidence in it. In the aftermath of the cold war, we are witnessing a transition towards a new pattern of international relations. With the uncertainty of the historical process that is establishing a new world order, the United Nations has once again become the eminently relevant, perhaps even the indispensable, Organization that its founding fathers wished it to be.

The emerging new international system and the universality of the membership of the United Nations, as well as the abundant good will it has garnered, offer it the unique opportunity not only to establish new guidelines to address international challenges but to ensure that the coming new world will be permeated with the values of collective security, peace, democracy, social justice and cooperation for mutual benefit. This is also a favourable time for the United Nations to raise global awareness, fashion a common world outlook, probe new frontiers and create new standards, particularly in the realms of sustainable and equitable global development; conflict prevention, management and resolution; human and democratic rights; and social justice.

Those great tasks, my delegation is convinced, will inevitably require commensurate changes in the structure and functional modalities of the United Nations system itself, if it is to cope with the challenges of the new international order. The institutions and agencies that reflected the exigencies of the last half-century must be modified or yield to new ones that mirror not only the optimism and needs of the present but also the hopes and aspirations of the future. The international system must turn — obviously, at a gradual and measured pace — towards a fairer and more equitable representation of its constituencies in all the organs of the system, and especially in the Security Council. This may indeed be the most cpportune time to review structural issues with new vision and boldness, the ultimate purpose being to instil and build into the system a dynamism that will enable it to respond and adjust promptly to changing global realities.

Furthermore, we feel that the United Nations must place significant emphasis on the creation of a reliable early warning system that would enable it to avert disasters and conflicts. An active, rather than a reactive, role on the part of the United Nations can go a long way towards reducing, if not preventing, human suffering and towards mitigating disasters and conflicts at reduced cost to the international community.

Secondly, all available evidence on the structure of the United Nations emphasizes the need to restructure it on the basis of equilibrium between the forces of centralization and decentralization. Certain problems, such as the environment, population and disarmament, may necessitate coordinated international action and centralized authority. Others, including the breakdown of political systems and regional inter-State conflicts may be better and more correctly understood and solved by regional actors, institutions and approaches. There is thus an imperative to set in motion a dynamic arrangement balancing centralization and decentralization to create the desired juridical basis for a new world order underpinned by a political culture of peace, justice, economic well-being and a healthy environment. Playing such a catalytic role should be the major preoccupation of the United Nations. Only such an environment can make the Organization an effective actor that protects and promotes peace, development and human rights.

The situation in the Horn of Africa is far from satisfactory, although it may be improving day by day. I must perhaps emphasize here that the impoverishment that stalks the region as a whole is largely man-made and cannot be attributed to the vicissitudes of nature, as is often done. Decades of war and civil strife have sapped the energy, productive capacity and problem-solving mechanisms of the populations, leaving them easily susceptible to even minor imbalances in rainfall patterns and natural calamities.

Hence, international emergency assistance and, even more, development assistance will remain vital for years to come in overcoming the consequences of decades of war and turmoil. We in the Government of Eritrea, along with our regional partners, realize that reliable and sustainable economic development will lie in effective regional cooperation hinging on durable peace and stability. It is in this spirit that we and our partners are prepared to pool our resources to secure regional peace through mechanisms of close consultation and coordination for conflict prevention and resolution, and by broadening areas of economic interaction and cooperation.

It is against this backdrop, and within the framework of a regional approach, that we have attempted to address the quest for collective security in our region. In Somalia the countries of the region, under the chairmanship of President Melles Zenawi of Ethiopia, have done much to restore normalcy to the country by bringing the warring factions to the negotiating table. This regional effort has complemented and acted as a vital linkage to international intervention at a number of crucial junctures.

In this connection, we believe that this is an auspicious moment for the United Nations to decide to focus in the period ahead only on the provision of assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the devastated country of Somalia. The opinion advanced by some in the last few days that the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) is vital for and will enhance political reconciliation is, we are convinced, seriously flawed. Indeed, all evidence from the country indicates that such action is likely to complicate or delay the process. On the other hand, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) should take upon itself, and be encouraged to continue, the political reconciliation it has facilitated in the past.

In the Sudan, the countries of the region have applied the same regional approach and have proposed different frameworks of conflict resolution to facilitate a comprehensive political settlement that takes into account the best interests and welfare of both sides. Here, too, the international community should encourage and support the regional efforts undertaken under the auspices of IGADD.

Some of the major problems that have existed for many years are still with us and, indeed, there are now new ones. Thus, the crisis in the former Yugoslavia does not appear to be any nearer to solution. The events in Rwanda are a tragic reminder of human folly and have etched an indelible mark on the collective conscience of humanity. These events no doubt reinforce the necessity for preventive measures and perhaps the need to make a fresh assessment of the conventional limitations of the United Nations in peace-keeping.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.23

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

23rd Meeting
Friday, 7 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . Côte d'Ivoire

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 9 ***(continued)***

General debate

Address by His Royal Highness Prince Mbilini Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will first hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

His Royal Highness Prince Mbilini Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, His Royal Highness Prince Mbilini Dlamini, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Prince Dlamini (Swaziland): I bring with me the greetings and good wishes of His Majesty King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Indlovukazi, the Government and people of the Kingdom of Swaziland to all our friends and fellow Members of the United Nations.

On behalf of Swaziland, may I begin by offering my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are confident that with your able leadership our deliberations will be guided towards a successful conclusion, for the benefit of the global community.

Let me also offer Swaziland's gratitude and praise to your predecessor, whose wise direction ensured the success of the deliberations of the Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

The past 12 months have presented many challenges to our Organization, in its pivotal role as an effective instrument for fostering global peace and security, and as a dynamic forum for promoting a spirit of understanding and cooperation among the nations of the world.

Clearly, significant progress has been made in meeting these challenges, and my delegation recognizes the role of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whose diplomatic skills and untiring efforts have contributed so greatly to the continuing ability of the United Nations to achieve the successes on which the whole world depends.

In April this year, the eyes of the world were focused on South Africa as the people of that country went to the polls to elect, for the first time, a Government that would represent all South Africans, regardless of race, religion or creed. Today, in a triumph for the spirit of reconciliation, peace and compromise among all South Africans, we welcome the new, non-racial and democratic South Africa back into the family of the United Nations.

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

While congratulating the people of South Africa for their substantial achievement, the Kingdom of Swaziland also salutes the role of the United Nations in bringing about an end to a regime it had long opposed. As a result the millions of South African people who had been denied a voice in this Hall will once more be heard. South Africa's triumph is therefore also a victory for the principle of universality, on which the United Nations was founded.

As neighbour, partner and ally, Swaziland, and the other countries in the subregion, have particular reason to rejoice at the successful process of transition in South Africa. Quite apart from the benefit of peace to the area brought about by a successful political transformation, we all look forward to enjoying the fruits of closer economic and trade cooperation with the region's most influential country.

Swaziland has been most impressed with the very clear policy of His Excellency President Mandela, stated consistently since he took office in May, on the importance of close cooperation with others in the region.

We have already welcomed South Africa into the Southern African Development Community, and other initiatives are under way to forge closer trade and economic links between our newly liberated neighbour and the rest of the subregion, for South Africa cannot expect to stand on its own in the future. It is a fact that the economic destinies of the nations in our subregion are inextricably bound together.

Even as we celebrate the return of peace and stability in South Africa, our continent continues to provide some of the worst examples of people's inhumanity to one another.

Swaziland watched with horror as the tragedy unfolded earlier this year in Rwanda. Many words have been spoken here about the dreadful scenes we all witnessed, and our hearts went out to the millions whose lives were shattered by the effects of the civil war there. No other justification is needed to spur on our efforts to address the issue of conflict prevention and resolution than the loss of so many lives, so quickly, in Rwanda. We pray that a formula for true, lasting peace may be found, and that the two peoples may be able to find some way of living side by side with each other.

The situations in Burundi, Liberia, Sudan and Somalia also continue to give us cause for grave concern. Swaziland supports all peaceful efforts aimed at bringing about negotiated settlements to the problems in these countries.

Despite the many set-backs to peace on our continent, the past twelve months have also seen substantial progress among a number of countries - progress which owes much to the efforts of our Organization.

I have spoken already of our admiration for the developments in one of our neighbouring countries, South Africa, which took the path of reconciliation and peace towards the much-needed process of reconstruction and development.

The same degree of respect applies to our other neighbour, Mozambique, which, after so long a period of bitter hatred amongst its people, has at last chosen to lay down weapons in favour of the ballot box. Swaziland joins the world in praying for a peaceful election process later this month, and calls on the leaders to allow the same spirit of reconciliation and unity that brought an end to the war after so many years to continue after a new government has been chosen.

We appeal to the international community to continue to provide the financial, technical, moral and material support that will be necessary for Mozambique to rebuild itself, and to give its people a chance to fulfil their high potential.

The Kingdom of Swaziland warmly welcomes the agreement that brought about a peaceful solution to the situation prevailing in our sister Kingdom of Lesotho. We welcome the opportunity presented now for the Basotho people themselves to address their concerns. It is our fervent hope that the agreement will be implemented successfully, without undue delay, so that lasting peace and stability may come to the kingdom.

The direct effects of developments on our continent are of obvious concern to the Kingdom of Swaziland. But in this day and age of global interdependence, the potential effects on us of situations outside Africa are of equal importance. Two recent developments provide particular cause for hope in areas of long-running dispute.

In the Middle East, the seeds of peace and reconciliation, sown last year by Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat, and encouraged by the United States, Norway, the United Nations and others, are at last bearing fruit. Talk of trade and cooperation is replacing the noise of gunfire, as the bitter rivalries of generations give way to a new order of peace in the region.

Swaziland salutes all those who contributed to the process of peace in the Middle East; we appeal to the leaders of the region to join in the process and to allow it to continue without disruption, so that precious resources may be directed towards worthwhile development goals.

The Kingdom of Swaziland has long been concerned about the spread of nuclear weapons, and the effect this has had on world stability. We were therefore encouraged by the recent initiatives on the part of the United States and Russia to substantially reduce the number of their weapons.

We also support all efforts on the Korean peninsula, where disaster has been pending, to bring about real progress on the nuclear issue. This issue has been the focus of major instability for the entire far-east region, and Swaziland fully supports all efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution to the problem.

We look forward to the peaceful reunification of the two Koreas, and encourage all moves to bring this to fruition.

Wars and conflict situations in Africa and around the world continue to stretch our belief that people can ever live peacefully with one another. More and more, the resources of the United Nations are being overextended to meet the challenges these situations present, and conflict resolution finds itself close to the top of the agenda for action by this Assembly.

Mercifully, the Kingdom of Swaziland has been spared the horrors of internal conflict, but no country can really feel immune to the effects of war and confrontation, wherever these may be occurring. Deciding on the best way for the world to cope with conflict situations is therefore a problem we all share, and we in Africa are conscious of our particular responsibility for deciding on mechanisms to limit, prevent and cope with conflict situations developing on our continent.

This issue has been central during discussions at subregional and regional conferences. Most recently, important resolutions were adopted at the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit in Tunis, and at the Southern Africa Development Community summit in Gaborone, which went some way towards deciding on the regional response to one of Africa's most pressing problems.

But despite almost unanimous willingness for our countries to become involved more directly in the continent's conflicts, it was clearly recognized that the majority of us lacked the resources to lend an effective hand.

The Kingdom of Swaziland therefore supports the growing call for an integrated approach to conflict resolution on our continent, which would bring close cooperation between Africa and the rest of the world by establishing mechanisms to coordinate the resources of both in the most effective way. The OAU is clearly in the best place to mobilize the efforts of its members - and most important of all, to undertake preventive diplomacy before a situation has the chance to develop - while the United Nations can continue to play its role as coordinator of the international response.

Many of Africa's present conflicts could well have been prevented or contained if properly coordinated mechanisms had already been in place. The Kingdom of Swaziland welcomes discussion here so that a plan of action can be agreed upon quickly on this vitally important issue.

In this regard, and as a measure of Swaziland's acceptance of her responsibility to the rest of the world, His Majesty King Mswati III announced at the OAU summit in Tunis this year that he would be taking steps to decide how best the Kingdom's small defence force could be used alongside other troops in multinational forces for the benefit of global peace and stability.

His Majesty has begun the process of investigating under what conditions the nation's soldiers can be offered, bearing in mind the small size of the defence force and our relative lack of appropriate weapons and equipment. Clearly, we cannot allow our soldiers to enter into potentially dangerous situations without proper protection and without adequate training.

These are some of the issues to be looked at before we can fully commit ourselves to taking this more active role in global peace-keeping, and we will be approaching the Secretary-General for consultations on this important initiative.

This session of the General Assembly is entrusted with the task of discussing "An Agenda for Development". The focus of the world is on the requirement now to channel our resources towards achieving lasting global stability through the sustainable development of our countries, providing us with improved standards for all our peoples.

The welcome end to the period of confrontation between the world's super-Powers should mean that increased global resources can now be redirected to achieving a new and more balanced world economic order. Closer attention can now be given to the plight of all developing countries, which continue to suffer the effects of serious development neglect. This crucial point was discussed at length at last weekend's meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Madrid, where the view of the developing world was made very clear.

The continent of Africa contains the highest number of the world's poorest countries, and any agenda for development should take into account the special circumstances surrounding the inability of this region to develop effectively.

We in the region know ourselves, all too well, what factors continue to obstruct our progress. It is a familiar catalogue, including resource constraints; inappropriate development policies; the slow pace of industrialization and transformation into producers of processed goods; inadequate infrastructure; natural disasters; and a continuing round of armed conflicts.

We know the problems, and we are trying our best to overcome them. We understand our responsibility to our people to mobilize our resources in the most effective way to overcome the obstacles to national development. The need is clear, and our resources and abilities are limited, but we are trying hard. We also recognize that we cannot hope to achieve long-term sustainable development without, at least, the short-term assistance of the rest of the global community.

Much of what we need is contained in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, and our continent's collective appeal is for the swift and full implementation of its many programmes. But each nation has its separate, distinct needs.

Swaziland welcomes recent initiatives towards strengthening South-South cooperation, and we believe they will result in real progress towards overcoming the economic challenges facing us all in that grouping.

In trying to meet our national economic development objectives, the Kingdom of Swaziland has adopted a broad and integrated approach aimed at achieving sustainable, "human-centred" development, through policies that focus on the priorities of the reduction of poverty, universal access to primary school, and affordable primary health care.

Recent United Nations initiatives also guide us in our Government policies. As a follow-up to the Earth Summit, for example, we have established a national environmental authority to ensure that environmental concerns are properly integrated into all stages of public policy and national development strategy formulation.

Swaziland welcomed the opportunity to address the recent United Nations Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, and the adoption of the Programme of Action constitutes a significant step in our collective aim. The Kingdom had already embraced the option of acceptable child spacing as the cornerstone of our population growth policy, and we have begun a comprehensive programme of education for our people in the realities of and efforts to deal with overpopulation.

These and all aspects of the economic development of the Kingdom will be debated by the whole nation during the process of national economic consultation, which was recently initiated by His Majesty the King. The process is designed to allow all Swazis the opportunity to be involved in deciding the future direction of the Kingdom's economy, and will embody the nation's wishes for future priorities and strategies. These in turn will form the basis of our request for future support from our friends in the international community, and we will be keeping the United Nations fully informed of developments.

The process follows on from last year's very successful political reforms, resulting from a similar period of national consultation, which concluded last October with direct elections to Parliament under a new system of secret ballot. The democratic elections were declared free and fair by the international community and, more importantly, were what the Swazi people themselves had chosen.

Both processes - political and economic reform - show clearly Swaziland's principle of rule by consensus of the people. We believe this principle is at the heart of the peace and stability we have enjoyed for many generations, and it has spared us the horrors of internal conflict suffered by so many on our continent.

I spoke earlier of South Africa's return to the international community, as, among other things, a triumph for the United Nations in upholding the principle of universality. The Kingdom of Swaziland urges the Assembly to apply the same principle to investigate the merits of the case of the Republic of China in Taiwan.

His Majesty King Mswati III joined a number of other Heads of State in raising this issue at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. His Majesty called for the establishment of an ad hoc committee to determine whether or not the Republic of China had a reasonable case for rejoining our Organization. This call has been taken up by an increasing number of countries that support the idea of looking into the issue in more detail.

Quite apart from the principle of universality, there are other important factors for us to consider when reviewing the case. The Republic of China in Taiwan has much to offer to the world community. It clearly has the resources to be of more use to the rest of the international community. More important, though, is the desire of the Republic of China to be of use - and assistance - to the rest of the world.

The Kingdom of Swaziland, along with a large number of other developing countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Americas, has had first-hand evidence of the Republic of China's willingness to offer generous humanitarian and development assistance.

As more and more worthy targets appear for the United Nations resources, we can surely ill afford to reject the call to investigate further whether that country's assistance can be put to wider use through the agencies of our Organization.

At the heart of the issue, though, is the fact that 21 million people believe that they are not represented in the United Nations. These people believe that they are excluded from our founding principle of universality. In consideration of this right, which they believe has been denied them, the time has surely come for us to listen to their voices.

The Kingdom of Swaziland welcomes and supports the participation of the Republic of China In Taiwan in the activities of the United Nations, and we therefore call once more for the establishment of an ad hoc committee to review the case for their re-admittance to the Organization.

The United Nations has a distinguished history of 49 years of growth and achievement. The challenges we faced almost 50 years ago, as the world emerged from global conflict, have changed in substance but not in importance.

We have the opportunity now, in this forum, to lay the foundations for an agenda for development that will bring about the stability and peace we all desire.

The Kingdom of Swaziland is proud of its membership of the United Nations and commends the work of all who have contributed to the many successes over the years. The nation is deeply indebted to the United Nations agencies, whose efforts are contributing so much to the attainment of our development goals.

On behalf of His Majesty King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Indlovukazi, and the whole Swazi nation, I should like to reaffirm my country's full support for, and commitment to, the Charter of the United Nations. May Almighty God bless these deliberations with the success they deserve.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland for the statement he has just made.

His Royal Highness Prince Mbilini Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam, on whom I now call.

Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam (Viet Nam) *(interpretation from French)*: First, allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that, under your guidance and with the active contributions of member countries, this session of the General Assembly will have a successful outcome. I also wish to take this opportunity to express our admiration for the efficient performance of your predecessor, Mr. Samuel R. Insanally. We greatly appreciate the great efforts made by Mr. Boutros-Ghali in his high post as Secretary-General of the United Nations in the cause of peace, national independence and development.

The United Nations is approaching the final year of its first half century of existence. The most appropriate way for us to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization is to help it act in a manner commensurate with its global role and with the important, difficult and complex tasks set out by the new world situation. Since the last session of the General Assembly, we have witnessed immense and profound changes in the world as a whole and in each region. Mankind is confronted by both opportunities and challenges. It is the task of each country and of the international community as a whole to realize the noble aspirations of mankind, to overcome the obstacles to settling global and pressing issues and to promote peace, cooperation and development.

The world panorama is full of contradictions. While the threat of a destructive world war has been further checked, ethnic, religious and territorial conflicts continue to persist or even multiply in a number of regions. Against this disturbing backdrop, there have been some rays of hope that certain conflicts in the world will be settled. The success of the struggle waged by the South African people to abolish apartheid and establish a new united, democratic and non-racist State in South Africa constitutes a historic achievement for the South African people, the United Nations and the world community. The Vietnamese delegation warmly welcomes the delegation of the new South Africa to the General Assembly.

In the Middle East, encouraging progress has been made, particularly between Palestine and Israel and between Jordan and Israel, in the negotiating process and the search for peace. These developments foster hopes of reaching a just and lasting peace in the region and of restoring the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination and an independent State in their own land.

Over the past year there have been certain positive developments in the world economy. In a number of countries there have been signs of recovery. Globalism and regionalism have accelerated. Economic competition is acute and, in this context, the developing countries continue to bear innumerable disadvantages. A considerable number of these developing countries, however, are beset by poverty and backwardness; with every passing day millions of people are threatened by starvation. The developing countries hope that, with the conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the decision to establish the World Trade Organization, trade and investment will be expanded, thus strongly enhancing international economic cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

They cannot, however, help being worried about attempts to use social and environmental issues as fuel for protectionism. This will affect the common sentiments amongst the world's nations at a time when joint efforts are needed to solve global issues in the interests of the development and advancement of every nation and of the entire international community.

In an increasingly interdependent world in which globalism is being strengthened, there is continuous pressure to facilitate increased cooperation on the basis of equal and mutual benefit and to narrow the gap between the level of development of the North and that of the South with a view to securing sustainable and lasting peace throughout the world.

We therefore welcome the Secretary General's initiative in producing his "Agenda for Development". We believe that through wide consultations between Member States we shall arrive at an agenda that responds to common demands and will ensure that the United Nations plays an active role in facilitating economic and social development and the eradication of poverty in Member countries, thereby strengthening the Organization's important role in international economic relations.

We share the view - expressed by many delegations - that the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of development are the two paramount tasks of the United Nations. It is our hope that the role of the United Nations in the field of development will be strengthened in response to the expectation of the countries of the world.

There is an increasingly irresistible trend towards dialogue and international and regional cooperation. In our view, international cooperation should be based on observance of the principles of respect for independence and national sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, mutually beneficial cooperation on the basis of equality, the settling of disputes through negotiation and without recourse to force or the threat of force. In today's world of increasing awareness of national independence, respect for the right of nations freely to determine their own course of development and to maintain their national identity is an essential condition for the maintenance of peace and stability and for the strengthening of international cooperation.

Blockades, embargoes, sanctions and the imposition of conditions in international relations are relics of the past. They run counter to the aspirations of peoples and to the common trend and are contrary to international law.

In this connection, we wish to express our deep sympathy with the Cuban people in respect of their current difficulties. We demand an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. We demand also prompt and effective implementation of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. We welcome the joint communiqué recently signed by the United States of America and Cuba on the question of Cuban emigrés. We hope that the two countries will continue their dialogue with a view to settling other outstanding differences between them.

At a time of opportunities and challenges, of hope and fear, the United Nations bears, more than ever, a heavy responsibility in regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. Never before has the United Nations been directly engaged in dealing with so many hotbeds of tension throughout the world. Despite the Organization's efforts, satisfactory solutions to the conflicts in Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda have yet to be found.

The tendency to resort more and more to measures of enforcement and intervention to try to resolve intra-State conflicts has prompted legitimate concern among many countries. We share the view that United Nations peace-keeping operations should strictly observe the principles of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. We believe that the best way to secure the peaceful settlement of conflicts is to persevere with dialogue. Lessons should be learnt from the successes and the failures of peace-keeping operations in recent times. This would help the United Nations the better to discharge the tasks that the Member States as a whole have entrusted to it.

The complex world situation and the increasingly important role of the United Nations urgently require restructuring of the Organization. In view of the growing democratization of international relations, we join those delegations that are demanding reform to democratize the United Nations system. This would include an increase in the membership of the Security Council to make it more representative, more in keeping with the changes that have taken place in the world and more transparent in its decision-making processes. Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly as the body most representative of the interests of Member States is also necessary.

Through the convening of international conferences, such as the recent International Conference on Population and Development, the coming World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development, the United Nations has clearly demonstrated its commitment to the promotion of international cooperation in the resolution of global social issues of vital interest to all nations.

I should like to mention in this important forum a particularly significant coincidence of history. As the United Nations prepares to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, the Vietnamese people are looking forward enthusiastically to commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh's solemn declaration to the entire world of the birth of an independent, free and democratic Viet Nam. Only now, half a century after its birth, is Viet Nam able to really concentrate its efforts on socio-economic development.

Located in the most dynamic development zone in the world, Viet Nam is fully aware of the danger constituted by the widening gap between its level of development and that of other countries of the region. It has therefore set itself the urgent task of rapidly overcoming its state of poverty and underdevelopment in order to join the stream of progress and development in the region and in the world. Viet Nam has embarked upon the path of reform and renewal in every sphere of its society's life. The core of this reform and renewal is the development of a multi-sector economy operating through a market mechanism and employing State regulation at the macro-economic level with a view to maintaining the country's socio-economic stability, along with the step-by-step establishment of a state of law of the people, by the people and for the people.

The reform and renewal process has achieved important initial results. The average annual growth rate of our gross national product for the three years from 1991 to 1993 was 7.3 per cent; for the first six months of this year, the rate rose to 8 per cent. Our international economic cooperation and trade relations and foreign investment in our country have grown rapidly. Our people's living conditions have been improved. Further progress has been made in the cultural, social, educational and health-care areas, especially regarding the care of children.

Along with economic reforms, Viet Nam has gradually carried out the reform and renewal of its political system in order to build a society in which the rights of each and every one will be increasingly ensured. We continue to move forward in our efforts to establish a state of law, perfect the legal system and undertake national administrative reform. After the promulgation of the new Constitution in 1992, our National Assembly adopted a number of important laws, including the civil law, the labour law, the land law, and the law on the promotion of domestic investment.

With these achievements, Viet Nam is now shifting towards a new stage in its development - that of the industrialization and modernization of the country. This long and arduous process has as its final objective a prosperous people, a strong nation and an equitable and civilized society.

To create a favourable international environment for national construction and development, Viet Nam has been pursuing a foreign policy of openness, diversification, and multilateralization of its relations, while carrying out our desire to become the friend of all countries in the interest of peace, independence and development. We are pleased to note that our policy is developing in complete harmony with the general trend throughout the world, and especially in South-East Asia - that is, the trend towards pursuing peace and cooperation in the interest of development, after decades of war and confrontation. In its implementation of this foreign policy, Viet Nam gives first priority to enhancing the relations of friendship and cooperation with neighbouring countries in the region, and to creating peace, stability, cooperation and development in South-East Asia. Our bilateral relations with each of the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and with the Association itself, are experiencing rapid and satisfactory growth, primarily in the economic and commercial areas, particularly since Viet Nam became an ASEAN observer in 1992. At the ministerial Conference of ASEAN held in Bangkok last July, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers unanimously supported Viet Nam's full membership in this Association. With the increased support of the ASEAN countries, Viet Nam is actively preparing to take all the necessary steps to join this Association as a full member. Viet Nam's accession to ASEAN is in conformity with the general trend towards responding to the interests of the countries of the region and reinforcing regional cooperation, especially in the economic and commercial areas, and at the same time facilitates the expansion of our relations with other countries and international organizations.

In keeping with the new regional context, all 10 countries of South-East Asia recently participated, for the first time, in the Conference of foreign ministers of ASEAN; an ASEAN Regional Forum, at which regional security was discussed, was also held for the first time on 25 July last in Bangkok. All this demonstrates the growing cooperation in South-East Asia, as well as the robust movement towards the attainment of the common goals of the region: peace, stability and security.

In order to ensure the peace, stability and development of each country and of the region as a whole, Viet Nam is of the view that the countries of the region should consolidate existing points of agreement, narrow differences and settle disputes, including those regarding the Eastern Sea, through bilateral and multilateral negotiations among those parties directly concerned, without resorting to the use or threat of force. While waiting and working for a fundamental and durable solution, all the parties concerned should restrain from any act that might further complicate the situation, and at the same time strictly respect each country's right of sovereignty on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zones, in keeping with international law and particularly with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

With regard to the Kingdom of Cambodia, Viet Nam ardently wishes to see its neighbour become an independent, peaceful, neutral, non-aligned country, maintaining friendly relations with all countries. It is Viet Nam's policy to strengthen good-neighbourly relations with the Kingdom of Cambodia and to respect the Cambodian people's right to self-determination. We consider that all signatories to the Paris Agreement on Cambodia are bound to scrupulously observe that Agreement, to refrain from interfering in that country's internal affairs and to actively contribute to the process of national reconciliation and the restoration of peace and stability in Cambodia.

In the interest of maintaining and strengthening the traditional friendly relations between Viet Nam and Cambodia and of protecting the legitimate rights of the Vietnamese residents who have been, for many generations, living in Cambodia, we wish to draw attention to the Immigration Law promulgated by the National Assembly of Cambodia on 26 August 1994. Certain articles of that Law have given rise to some concern. His Royal Highness King Norodom Sihanouk and the Royal Government of Cambodia share the legitimate concern of the Government of Viet Nam and have undertaken to avoid any regrettable consequences and agreed to begin negotiations with Vietnam soon to settle this problem.

The lifting by the United States of the embargo imposed upon Viet Nam has opened up new prospects for building and broadening multi-faceted cooperation between our two countries in the interests of the two peoples and in the service of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and throughout the world.

We firmly believe that multilateral relations, especially within the framework of the United Nations, are playing an increasingly important role in international life. As we move towards the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of our Organization, we shall be reviewing all the activities of the past 50 years, drawing the necessary lessons to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the United Nations system and to pursue tasks worthy of the confidence and expectations of the peoples of the world. For its modest part, Viet Nam will unceasingly strive to make positive contributions to the common cause of the United Nations for peace, development and social progress throughout the world.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, His Excellency Mr. Omar Mustafa Muntasser.

Mr. Muntasser (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic):* On behalf of my country and in my own behalf, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the Presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. The fact that you belong to our beloved continent, coming as you do from a country bound with my own by bonds of brotherhood and relations of friendship and cooperation is a source of added pride to us in your assumption of this high office. My delegation is confident that, familiar as you are with the work of the United Nations, and with your extensive experience in the field of international relations, you will be able to steer this session to a successful conclusion. I should also like to seize this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation of your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Insanally, for the wisdom he displayed, the efforts he made and the initiatives he took to reform the United Nations and enhance its role. Further, I wish to express our gratitude to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, for his tireless efforts to strengthen our Organization so as to enable it to face the numerous crises that beset the international community.

The international situation witnessed many developments during the forty-eighth session. The will of the people of South Africa has triumphed after a long struggle and great sacrifices. It is indeed heartening to see in our midst today the delegation of South Africa, representing a united, democratic and non-racial country.

Brotherly Yemen has survived its transient crisis and remains one united country, whose citizens are working with more determination and greater expectations, to build the modern State of Yemen. Along with these developments, tangible progress has been recorded in the implementation of the Peace Accord in Mozambique. Moreover, the artificial tension in the Korean peninsula is now subsiding. We are hopeful that the difficulties relating to the reunification of the Korean peninsula will be overcome through dialogue to be entered into on equal footing.

Such developments are a source of satisfaction and we greatly welcome them. However, they do not mask the gloomy points of the wider picture of the international situation. Many disputes still await a solution. The outbursts of nationalist passions, ethnic chauvinism and power struggles in the absence of any power among the people, have led to the outbreak of new regional conflicts. Although some of these conflicts are getting closer to a solution, as is the case in Liberia, where the conflict is heading towards a permanent solution, the international community must still support national reconciliation efforts in Afghanistan, overcome the setbacks to the peace efforts being undertaken in the Balkans, consolidate the role of the United Nations in establishing peace in that region and guarantee the legitimate rights of the parties to the dispute there.

The international community is also called upon to renew its efforts aimed at reaching a satisfactory solution to the problem of Cyprus. It must encourage peace talks on Angola and support work towards a negotiated solution in sisterly Somalia, in addition to demonstrating increased solidarity to alleviate the tragedy of the Rwandan people. It must also make more efforts to solve the problem of Kashmir on the basis of bilateral agreements and the relevant United Nations resolutions in particular.

In the interest of stability in the Persian Gulf region, my country stresses the importance of the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, and calls for an end to all interference in its internal affairs. We also consider that the sanctions imposed on Iraq, which cause suffering to the Iraqi people, should be lifted, since the reasons for these sanctions are no longer valid. Their continuation can only mean a grave injustice aimed at the destruction of the Iraqi people and the extermination of large groups of its population.

The United Nations has adopted many resolutions on the Question of Palestine, all of which acknowledge the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and to exercise the right of self-determination. Although the United Nations has repeatedly reaffirmed these resolutions for more than 40 years, the Palestinian question still awaits a solution, the Palestinian people remain displaced and their rights are systematically and continuously violated. This proves that the so-called ongoing peace process lacks the elements necessary for any comprehensive settlement. This also shows that the resolution of the Palestinian question and the establishment of comprehensive peace in the Middle East cannot be realized merely by returning Gaza back to its status as a municipality and adding Jericho to it, but must rather come about through the liberation of all occupied Arab territories including the Syrian Golan and the acceptance of a democratic solution that would meet all the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to return to their homeland and establish their own independent State.

A few months ago, we celebrated the historic victory of the people of South Africa. It is no coincidence that the struggle of the Palestinian people is in many ways similar to that of the people of South Africa, and that many of the acts of heroism of both peoples echo each other. The solution that made it possible to build a united, democratic and non-racial state in South Africa offers a model for resolving the question of Palestine through the establishment in Palestine of a democratic non-racial State with Al Quds as its capital, where Arabs and Jews can live together. This is the proper solution, without which it would be impossible to reach a just and lasting peace that serves the interests of both Jews and the Palestinian Arabs.

Mr. Sinunguruza (Burundi), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The numerous changes witnessed by the world after the cold war have created opportunities to build a more stable and secure world. However, the hopes of the peoples of the world for greater and better understanding and for wider cooperation have started to wane. The experience of the past few years has caused deep concern regarding some developments. Some States have begun to try to impose their control and to expand their hegemony, using their power and influence in utilizing international organs to implement their plans, and using them, particularly the Security Council, as a tool to punish those countries which abide by their principles and adopt independent policies and positions. This was the very context of the dispute between my country and France, Britain and the United States of America in what has become known as the Lockerbie crisis. This problem was raised, pushed arbitrarily through the Security Council, and dealt with under Chapter VII of the Charter, which is not applicable in this case since Libya has not threatened anybody and has never acted in a manner that jeopardized international peace and security. The whole issue is merely the suspicion that two Libyans may be connected to the Pan Am flight 103 incident.

Aware as it has been all along of the motivation behind this entire issue, my country has shown sincere readiness to cooperate in uncovering the truth and circumstances of that incident. We have taken the necessary judicial measures consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, with only one proviso, that they do not involve any violation of Libya's sovereign rights.

Although the Security Council was pushed into the adoption of resolution 731 (1992), Libya did declare its readiness effectively to cooperate in the implementation of that resolution. In that respect Libya took practical steps that were widely welcomed by numerous organizations, including the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Non-Aligned Movement. It was our hope that the three States concerned would take that into consideration and respond positively to the requests of Libyan authorities for cooperation in completing the investigation. However, the three States concerned responded in an entirely different way. Instead of accepting the initiatives calling for dialogue and negotiation, and showing flexibility in dealing with the other aspects of the crisis, by reconsidering Security Council resolution 748 (1992) with a view to lifting the sanctions imposed on the Libyan people, instead, they resorted to the Security Council once again and, using their influence, managed to persuade it to adopt resolution 883 (1993), tightening the sanctions imposed by resolution 748 (1992).

The argument invoked by the three States concerned to justify maintaining the sanctions and the threat even to tighten them further, is that Libya has not complied with the requirements of Security Council resolution 731 (1992). And when these States are confronted with the fact that the Jamahiriya has really complied with these requirements, their officials, and particularly British and American officials, answer with the words "Libya knows what is required of her". Officials in both countries have repeatedly used this phrase to such an extent that we are convinced that the aim behind the raising of the Lockerbie incident is not to uncover the truth and the circumstances of the issue but rather to achieve premeditated political objectives. Indeed, if the aim had really been to bring Libya to comply with the requirements of resolution 731 (1992), that aim has been fully realized. Libya has taken the legal measures necessary to pinpoint responsibility for the terrorist acts perpetrated against both American and French planes. Libya has requested the three States concerned to cooperate in completing the investigation in this respect. Libya has even invited neutral bodies to follow it up and international and humanitarian organizations to monitor its fairness. My country has cooperated with the French judge in charge of the investigation aimed at determining responsibility for the explosion aboard French UTA flight 772. Contacts in this respect still continue. My country has also cooperated with the Government of the United Kingdom in trying to uncover certain elements accused by the British Government of involvement in terrorist acts. To this end, several meetings were held between the Libyan and British sides. Today, we are very glad to see that negotiations have already started between Britain and the political and military wings of the Irish Republic Army (IRA) and that an agreement has been signed by the two parties. Now the leaders of the IRA are being received and welcomed at the highest level in both London and Washington with a view to holding negotiations with a view to ending the dispute and all its side effects.

Libya has condemned international terrorism in all its forms and declared its readiness to commit itself to whatever measures are adopted by the international community to combat this scourge. Libya has also severed all its relations with all groups and organizations suspected of being involved in terrorist acts. Libya has emphasized that it will not allow its territory, citizens or institutions to be used for such acts whether directly or indirectly. We have declared our readiness to punish severely whoever is proved to be involved in any terrorist acts. Libya has also declared that there are no terrorist training camps on its soil. It has repeated its invitation to the Security Council, or any international body mandated by the Council, to verify this. All these practical measures confirm the extent of my country's seriousness in stamping out the phenomenon of international terrorism. This seriousness has been reflected in the call by the Jamahiriya for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to be devoted to the study of the causes and dimensions of this problem and its support of the proposal to convene an international conference to define terrorism, including State terrorism, and the means to eradicate it in all its forms. It is State terrorism with which Libya is now being threatened at the hands of a State which is a permanent member of the Security Council. That State has abducted Libyan prisoners of war from Chad and is now training them and equipping them to undermine the security and stability of Libya. This is the same terrorism to which Libya fell victim in 1973 when Israeli planes intentionally shot down a Libyan civilian airliner, killing all 108 passengers aboard; and also when the United States of America in 1986 bombed Libyan cities while people were asleep in their beds and caused great loss of life and damage to property. Later it was revealed that the acts used by that State as a pretext for its aggression were unfounded.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has spared no effort in trying to resolve the dispute, including trying the two suspects in the Pan Am flight 103 incident, although the matter has been predetermined by the 1971 Montreal Convention which gives Libya the right to try the two suspects itself. However, the refusal by Britain and the United States of America to abide by this Convention, to which they are both parties, has prompted Libya to seek other ways of holding the trial. Thus, Libya offered to resort to the International Court of Justice or to surrender the two suspects to the United Nations office in Libya for investigation. Libya has also proposed that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should establish a fact-finding legal commission to verify the seriousness of the accusations, including carrying out a comprehensive investigation. Competent Libyan authorities referred the matter to the basic popular congresses which constitute our legislative authority and they in turn made the decision that they had no objection to letting the two suspects stand trial before a fair tribunal to be agreed upon. Proceeding from this, my country declared its readiness to enter into negotiations with the States concerned under the supervision of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the trial to be held in a place agreed to by all parties concerned where full guarantees would be available to establish the truth, indeed the very aim of Security Council resolution 731 (1992).

Recently, new information on the American aircraft incident has been uncovered, including a book entitled *Tracking the Octopus* by Coleman and Donald and the statements by the manager of a Swiss electronics company. These new revelations obliterate the central element on which the accusations against the two Libyan citizens was based. Despite all this, Libya maintained its cooperation in trying to identify all the circumstances surrounding the incident. On this basis, Libya accepted the proposal of the Council of the League of Arab States contained in its resolution 5373 of 27 March 1994. That proposal called for trying the two suspects by Scottish judges under Scottish law at the seat of the International Court of Justice. Even after new information was revealed by the Palestinian citizen, Yousef Shaaban, before a Lebanese Court, Libya did not hesitate to go ahead with the trial and did not waver in its declared readiness to accept any verdict emanating from such a trial.

This, once again, underlines the fact that the Libyan Jamahiriya has no objection to the trial of the two suspects. All that Libya wants is for the trial to be fair and just, free from any emotional or media influences, and with the availability of all guarantees consistent with the norms of legality and international law, which Libya has observed and applied. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) can testify to this, since that Court has considered, over the past 10 years, three cases to which Libya was a party. The ICJ decided the case relating to the continental shelf between Libya and Tunisia, and both parties fully implemented the ruling of the Court. The same happened in the case of the continental shelf between Libya and Malta; once again the two parties implemented the ruling of the International Court of Justice. This year, the Court decided the territorial dispute between the Jamahiriya and Chad. Though the ruling rejected Libya's demands, the Jamahiriya did implement it in a constructive spirit that was welcomed and appreciated by both the Security Council and the Secretary-General. This shows the extent of my country's commitment to and respect of international legality, something that great powers pay lip service to but never apply. These States refuse even to appear before the ICJ, since they believe in the legality of force and not the force of legality.

Most international and regional organizations have renewed their appeal to the three States to accept the initiatives calling for dialogue and negotiation, with a view to reaching a peaceful settlement to the crises. Those organizations, including the 11th Ministerial Conference of the States Members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the 60th Session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, welcomed Libya's acceptance of the Arab League's proposal. This august Assembly, which includes all States represented in those organizations, is now called upon to show its appreciation of Libya's position, Libya's steps and initiatives and the proposals that we have accepted. It should call on the three States concerned to show flexibility and enter into dialogue with the Jamahiriya with the aim of reaching a peaceful settlement to this problem. This Assembly is also called upon to express its support of these demands, so that the Security Council will reconsider its resolutions on the crisis and lift the unjust sanctions. It is absurd and ignorant to depict the sanctions as being against the Libyan Government, because in Libya there is no Government as such. The power is in the hands of the people, who now suffer the consequences of these sanctions - for example, the crash of a Libyan civilian aircraft in 1992, leading to the death of all 157 civilians aboard, as a result of the ban on spare parts. Furthermore, 1,622 people have been killed in car accidents, and 350 people, most of whom were children, old men and women died as a result of delays in moving them abroad for medical treatment. These sanctions have also caused economic damage estimated at $4.5 billion. These damages are detailed in official document S/1994/921.

Before the Second World War, and following the end of that war, the Libyan people suffered and continue to suffer all sorts of pressure, troubles and pains. We have been subjected to colonialism in its worst form: a Fascism that wreaked havoc in our country, killing, displacing and exiling countless numbers of our citizens. Against our will, we had to be a theatre of war between the colonial powers, a war that was fought on our soil and for which we were the fuel. That war's mines are still buried in our soil, in our farms and under our homes. From time to time, these mines explode and kill innocent people. In previous sessions of this Assembly, my country has repeatedly called on the States concerned to cooperate with us in removing these mines. Today, 7 October, coincides with the commemoration of the Libyan people of the 25th anniversary of the evacuation of the last Fascists who had settled in Libya and oppressed its people. Once again I repeat my call and urge the States concerned to respond positively to the resolutions of the General Assembly, instructing them to provide the necessary information on mines, give technical assistance in removing them, and pay compensation for the losses they have caused. This may also be a good opportunity to remind the imperialist states that occupied our lands for over 40 years that we have not forgotten the ruin and destruction they left behind.

I should also like to announce that my country, through this Assembly and other forums, will seek to compel colonialist states to pay fair compensation for the resources they have looted and the wealth and money they have plundered from our country. The peoples of the world are called upon to adopt a historic resolution, through this Organization, condemning colonialism and forcing former colonial powers to compensate their former colonies, in order to prevent the re-emergence of colonialism and prevent the powerful from once more blackmailing and oppressing the weak.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya welcomes efforts aimed at enhancing security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. We voice our satisfaction with the initiatives whose objective is to enhance economic, social, cultural and environmental cooperation in the region. Libya calls for taking all measures necessary to remove all causes of tension in the area, especially through the withdrawal of foreign military fleets whose continued presence jeopardizes peace and security in the Mediterranean, which in turn are closely linked to international peace and security. The Arab Maghreb Union has achieved tangible progress on the road towards economic integration among its countries and towards the consolidation of the underpinnings of development in these countries. It has also opened new channels of cooperation with organizations in the areas to which we belong both geographically and culturally. Libya welcomes those steps and expresses the hope that the Maghreb Union will succeed in playing a similar role with its counterpart organizations on the other side of the Mediterranean, beginning with the intensification of contacts and meetings, as well as active dialogue with the institutions concerned, on a basis of equality and common interests in a manner capable of responding to the concept of joint development and the collective responsibility for maintaining peace and strengthening cooperation on the shores of the Mediterranean.

In view of the stability of the political system in the Jamahiriya and its importance as an economic market, it would be impossible to marginalize or ignore its role in any cooperation between the shores of the Mediterranean if such cooperation is achieve its objectives, at the forefront of which is serving the peoples of the region and achieving their prosperity.

Some progress has been registered recently in the field of disarmament. This is a welcome development. Libya looks forward to more international cooperation with a view to destroying nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as other weapons of mass destruction. We look forward to the banning of the development, stockpiling and use of all such weapons. My country also hopes that more efforts will be made to conclude a treaty on making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone and the activation of the initiative aimed at making the Middle East region free from weapons of mass destruction. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is a party to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We hope that the preparatory committee for the 1995 review conference will, in its next session, reach an understanding that takes into consideration the concerns of all parties to the Treaty, especially as regards its extension. My country still has some difficulty in accepting an indefinite extension of the Treaty, because such an extension does not take into account several of our concerns, including the unavailability of credible security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon states. Furthermore, the area in which we live suffers from a security imbalance, resulting from Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons and its non-adherence to the non-proliferation regime. It has not acceded to the Treaty, nor has it signed a safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That is why my country would like to emphasize that it is essential to address these concerns at the time of considering the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995.

Respect for and protection of human rights is one of the fundamental underpinnings of Libyan policy. This has been demonstrated in various forms which included the setting up of the International Committee for the Qaddafi Human Rights Prize and the adoption of the green document on human rights and basic human freedoms. Libya is determined to support and contribute to all international efforts aimed at guaranteeing the effective enjoyment of human rights. We thus welcome the conclusions of the Vienna Conference, which constitute a step on the road to the support and enhancement of human rights. That human rights Conference rejected the manipulation of human rights and their use as a tool of political pressure. This universally adopted principle must be respected, especially by States that selectively raise problems related to human rights. The international community must stand up to any attempt by any State or group of States to exploit human rights as a means of interfering in the internal affairs of other States. It must also oppose any attempt by any State or group of States to distort the principles and values of other peoples or to promote the principles and values of such States or groups of States as the only proper values that should be embraced by all peoples.

The international community's hopes for a secure and stable world cannot be realized without addressing economic problems, particularly in the developing countries, where economies continue to face difficulties as a result of the aggravation of the problem of external debts, the application of protectionist trade policies, the imposition of harsh conditions for their importation of advanced technology, the deteriorating prices of raw materials and the continued attempts to impose new taxes, such as the carbon tax, which could hurt not only the economies of the oil-exporting States but also those of oil-importing countries. We believe it is impossible to solve these problems effectively unless the international community deals seriously with and puts an end to the erroneous practices that continue to characterize international economic relations. Such practices include coercive economic measures, such as the freezing of assets and the confiscation by certain developing countries of the property of a number of developing countries, including my own. Such measures constitute an impediment to growth, aside from the fact that they run counter to the Charter of the United Nations, norms of international law and the resolutions of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly is the natural place for Member States to exercise their rights and express their views on the initiatives aimed at reforming the United Nations. In the course of the last session, we followed with keen interest everything that was achieved in this regard. My country expresses its satisfaction at the progress made towards revitalizing the activities of the General Assembly and the establishment of an effective working relationship between the Assembly and the Security Council. We hope future efforts will result in an increase in the membership of the Security Council based on equitable geographical distribution. To our mind, this process must be accompanied by measures to remove obstacles to the proper functioning of the Council, such as the privilege of veto power, and improvements in its working methods so that it can function in accordance with the principles of the Charter and, eschewing double standards, deal consistently with all issues.

If we examine past Security Council practices we shall find that while the Council showed interest in trying to secure commitment to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, it has turned and continues to turn a blind eye to Israel, which has not acceded to the Treaty and actually possesses 200 nuclear warheads. Furthermore, the Security Council has insisted on invoking Chapter VII of the Charter in cases to which it is not applicable, while at the same time failing to invoke Chapter VII in the case of Israel, despite its defiance of United Nations resolutions and its continued occupation of the territories of States Members of the United Nations. The Council kept silent on the Israeli refusal to withdraw from southern Lebanon and on the massacres perpetrated against the Palestinians, such as the one in Hebron's Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi Al-Sharif - the Mosque of Abraham - where, in an act of terrorism, a fanatical Zionist settler, trained in an American camp, killed over 50 Palestinians while they were praying.

My country believes that, in the context of reforming the Security Council, the Council must be neutral and give none of its members a chance to dominate it or steer it towards serving its own interests, as has been the case in so many instances, the latest of which was the Council's granting of permission to one of its permanent members to invade an independent State Member of the United Nations, the Republic of Haiti. It has been said that the objective of that action was to restore democracy and protect human rights. If this were true, why was there no such action in the past, when the people of that country were suffering under the yoke of a repressive regime, subjected to the most vicious violations of their human rights? What happened was a flagrant violation of the Charter, an act of aggression against the inviolability of an independent country. It also establishes the dangerous precedent of giving permission to a State, unhappy about waves of immigrants reaching its shores, to occupy the land where the immigration originates.

Libya cannot afford to overlook this invasion or keep silent about it, first, as a matter of principle and, secondly, because Haiti has a special place in our history. Forty-five years ago Haiti played a decisive role in a matter of interest to us. Its deciding vote won the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on Libya's independence.

At this time next year, the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations will begin. While developments in recent years have revealed some weaknesses in some of the United Nations organs' handling of dispute settlement and crisis management, this cannot be attributed to the Charter but, rather, to the tendency by certain Powers, insisting that their approach alone should be adopted, to impose their hegemony on the handling of international matters.

This question should be the focus of attention in the next session because it will mark the demise of the old order and the building of the new order that will replace it. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya intends to participate with others in building this new order to ensure that it will be an order based on justice and equality that respects peoples' political and economic options, secures full commitment to international law and full respect for the Charter of the United Nations and stands up to those who would push the United Nations towards the fate of the League of Nations. The new order we need is one that enhances and protects human rights and eradicates poverty, suffering, division, conflicts, disputes and wars. It must be an order in which no State seeks to impose its hegemony and abuse its influence, an order that supports the settlement of disputes among States by peaceful means, not by arbitrary and coercive means. We need a new order under whose umbrella all peoples can look optimistically to a future where security, peace and stability prevail.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Solomon Islands, His Excellency the Honourable Francis Joseph Saemala.

Mr. Saemala (Solomon Islands): I wish, first of all, to warmly congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, a responsibility he will discharge effectively with the proven diplomatic skills with which he has served his country and his region so well. I take this opportunity also to applaud the good work and leadership of his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, who presided over the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

It is appropriate that on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of this Organization we enter a new era in international relations, an era untainted by the cold-war politics that held peace and positive change hostage for too long. Opportunities now abound for change and lasting peace. This new era demands that all Member States take a global view of how the Organization can best meet the objectives set out in the Charter.

President Bill Clinton and President Boris Yeltsin demonstrated this new hope for peace at the opening of the general debate, when both addressed the General Assembly on the same day instead of on consecutive days, as was the old practice. In a spirit of cooperation, these two world leaders described their intent to reduce their nation's stockpiles of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. But disarmament must start from the heart. And I hope that this is the case with the step these two Presidents have taken towards the betterment of all humankind.

Today, we would recall that peace and hatred come from within people - the mirror of a nation, the image of a region and the living treasure of the global community. In order to build a peaceful and safe world for future generations, our resolve to reduce nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction must lie within the hearts of our leaders and policy makers throughout the world. We must therefore seize this opportunity and work together to build a better world.

In this regard, Solomon Islands welcomes the various peace initiatives that continue to bring hope to the world community. The noble efforts of President Mandela to chart a new direction for South Africa must be commended. In his first address as the first President of the new democratic South Africa, President Mandela acknowledged the efforts of the international community in this way:

> "The universal struggle against apartheid and its final dismantlement was not an act of charity arising out of pity for the majority of South African people but an affirmation of our common humanity."

Progress towards a lasting peace in the Middle East has renewed the hope of the international community for stability in that region. The parties involved in these negotiations deserve our sincere acclaim and praise and our continuing support. Replacing guns with meaningful handshakes often takes leaders beyond their physical nature and leads them to resort to their spiritual mindsets - a dimension that is often ignored but which is an essential ingredient in a recipe for conflict resolution.

The cease-fire in Northern Ireland has changed people's perception of the impossibility of the simple reality of living without guns and bullets. These are telling achievements for our times, and their roots are embedded in the human spirit of love and kindness.

Despite United Nations interventions to restore intra-State and international peace and security, the world is still riddled with trouble spots and endangered by human-induced threats such as the potential impact of climate change and sea-level rise. We witness with horror the human suffering in Rwanda, Somalia, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Haiti. Solomon Islands calls on the parties concerned to lay down their arms and resort to non-violent means of negotiating peace. True and real peace has to spring from within the warring parties, replacing animosity.

Close to home in the Solomon Islands is the five-year-old crisis on Bougainville, a province of Papua New Guinea. It spilled over into Solomon Islands and caused a rift between the two countries. Nevertheless, through a process of mutual dialogue between the National Government of Papua New Guinea and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, several important agreements have been signed. These include the Honiara commitments to peace, the cease-fire agreement and the historic peace-keeping agreement on Bougainville. The role of the Solomon Islands Government in this conflict has been conciliatory, facilitating peace negotiations amongst the parties concerned. Solomon Islands supports the Bougainville Peace Conference, expected to be convened on 10 October. This reflects our commitment to restoring peace and normalcy on Bougainville.

Solomon Islands pledges its support and commitment to the ideals of the United Nations. We believe it to be the only world body capable of maintaining world peace and security. Solomon Islands shares the views of New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Right Honourable Don McKinnon, whose statement at the general debate provided six important management issues that should be addressed while conducting United Nations peace-keeping operations. There is no doubt in my mind that all of us want an effective United Nations - an Organization that meets the objectives it sets out to achieve, an Organization whose Charter is valid because its actions are reliable.

Solomon Islands welcomes the current initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General in reforming the Organization and supports proposals made by other Member States for further reforms. These reforms, in our view, must also reflect the needs of small island developing States such as my own, particularly the need to remove "the floor" to enable Member States to meet their financial obligations. Some want to pay their assessed annual contributions but do not have the capacity to do so; hence a relative and fair formula should be worked out.

In his report (A/49/1) on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General has identified peace, the economy, the environment, justice and democracy as the five interlocking pillars of development. These will provide the foundations for the kind of development that will ensure human progress.

"An Agenda for Peace" paved the way forward from the dark ages of the cold war; the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was a reawakening initiative to save planet Earth; the Second World Conference on Human Rights sought to establish universal rights for all peoples throughout the world irrespective of race, creed, political affiliation or sex; the International Conference on Population and Development saw the need to control the soaring world population, which now stands at 5.7 billion; and next year the World Summit for Social Development and the World Conference on Women will address poverty, unemployment, social integration and the empowerment of women to take their rightful place in society. These are efforts of Member States committed to the noble cause of securing a peaceful, safe and sustainable world to live in. To achieve these noble goals, an effective global partnership is of paramount importance. Technology has made the world's smaller economies become more interdependent.

Agenda 21, the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, made a special case for small island developing States because of their peculiar vulnerabilities. The response to this call was the convening of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in Barbados in April this year. The passage from Rio to Barbados, at least for small island developing States, was a Programme of Action outlining national, regional and international actions. Our collective support is needed to implement this. If we agree that development takes many forms and requires different responses, then our task will be made easier if we act together. Solomon Islands fully supports the Barbados Programme of Action and calls on the members of the international community to honour their commitments as spelled out in Agenda 21. The successful implementation of the Programme of Action will depend on these commitments.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his "Agenda for Peace" report to the Security Council, stressed that cooperation with regional arrangements and organizations could be of great benefit to Member States if their activities were consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter and governed by the provisions of Chapter VIII. Some of those bodies have already gained observer status at the United Nations. This shows the useful role these arrangements and organizations can play in international affairs. Therefore, the strengthening of regional arrangements and organizations that are working closely with the United Nations is a critical issue.

In this regard, Solomon Islands strongly supports the decision by the South Pacific Forum to seek United Nations observer status at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We acknowledge with gratitude the role of Australia, the current Chairman of the South Pacific Forum, in guiding this initiative through the United Nations system on the Forum's behalf. We thank Member States that have expressed support for this call and invite others to do likewise.

As a member of the South Pacific Forum and the Melanesian Spearhead Group, Solomon Islands endorses the Forum Communiqué issued following the meeting of the twenty-fifth South Pacific Forum held in Brisbane, Australia, this year. We are a party to the Joint Declaration on Economic and Trade Cooperation signed in Solomon Islands this year between Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. Solomon Islands calls upon the international community to support our regional arrangements and organizations from which our strength for collective action is derived and which are responsible for our flow of communication.

Forestry and fisheries resources remain my country's main income earners. The Solomon Islands Government is gravely concerned about the unsustainable utilization and management of these resources and has taken steps to ensure sustainable harvesting and conservation measures and to form a national policy. We are party to Agreements reached in Brisbane at the meeting of the South Pacific Forum to cooperate on a wider basis in order to ensure sustainable development of fisheries and forestry resources in our region. Because of the fragility of our ecological system, our biodiversity resources, including forestry and fisheries and other marine living resources, are threatened.

It is heartening to note that after 12 years of negotiations the world will witness the coming into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in November this year. However, we strongly feel that further cooperation is still needed from the distant water fishing nations regarding sustainable harvesting of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks, including non-targeted species. We therefore urge distant-water fishing nations to come to grips with the need to complete, as soon as practicable, negotiations on a legally binding agreement on proper conservation and management and sustainable utilization of high seas fisheries resources.

Education is a priority sector in my country. It is a key to the effective management of my country's natural resources as well as a means of achieving the advancement of women to take their rightful place in society. There is a direct link between the education of women and population control. We welcome the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and look forward to the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995.

The World Summit for Social Development also has profound implications for capacity-building, institutional strengthening and the transfer of technologies and their appropriate use. Human-centred activities, including tourism development and skills training, are important for the development of human resources. We endorse the 1994 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its emphasis on human-centred development, an approach that has positive ripple effects in solving other social problems.

Drug trafficking and the criminal activities associated with it worry us in the Pacific, and we are not alone in this. We need international cooperation to stop the movement of illegal drugs from one region to another.

Solomon Islands supports the South Pacific Forum position that the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) should be extended indefinitely. However, we would like to see firm commitments from the nuclear-weapon States to show the world a leadership role in reducing their stockpiles. We also wish to see a rigid review mechanism set up to be a safeguard instrument as an integral part of the indefinite extension agreement.

It is encouraging to hear the United States, the Russian Federation and China speak in support of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is hoped that a level of harmony between the NPT, the comprehensive test-ban treaty and the cut-off convention may be maintained to enhance the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in an integrated manner.

Solomon Islands urges the post-Forum dialogue partners that have not yet done so to ratify the South Pacific nuclear-free zone Treaty. Nuclear testing in the Pacific is not part of our vocabulary.

Consistent with our belief in a nuclear-free world, waste dumping in the Pacific Ocean is not to be encouraged. We strongly oppose those who may violate this natural rule. We also firmly oppose the transshipment and transboundary movement of plutonium in the South Pacific region.

We need to see some further movement towards a speedy implementation of the Matignon Accords. In this regard, we request the Government of France and the territorial authorities to increase their efforts to achieve real economic and social rebalancing.

Solomon Islands welcomes the move to formulate an agenda and proposals to promote trade and investment between the United States and the Pacific Islands, which will be the subject of a meeting at the East-West Centre in Hawaii later this year.

Apart from the other vulnerabilities that plague small island developing States, the potential impact of climate change and rising sea levels poses a great threat to Pacific islands. There is overwhelming scientific evidence pointing to the danger we now face.

In this regard, Solomon Islands supports the Alliance of Small Island States, which has submitted to next year's Conference of the parties to the Convention on Climate Change an additional protocol aimed at securing a reduction of the emission of greenhouse gases to the 1990s level by 2005, a protocol to which the industrialized countries would be obliged to be parties.

We in Solomon Islands firmly believe that the Republic of China on Taiwan has much to contribute to the work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in terms of international cooperation and development. This Republic, with a population more than 58 times that of my own country and highly technologically advanced, deserves to be admitted as a Member of the United Nations. The full participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the important work of the United Nations would be an affirmation of the Charter and of democracy and a manifestation of the human spirit's pursuit of a better quality of life for humankind. In my Government's view, a move as noble as the admission of the Republic of China on Taiwan would be not an obstacle to reunification, but a catalyst in the process. In our view, the Secretary-General should use his good offices to encourage the establishment of a committee specifically to facilitate and/or work progressively towards the re-entry of the Republic of China to membership of the United Nations.

President Ernesto Samper Pizano of the Republic of Colombia, speaking from this podium, described Colombia as

> "a country searching for peace because it so loves life." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, forty-ninth session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting, p. 8)*

We in Solomon Islands, too, love life very much, and our search is for a better quality of life, which should flow from the wise and sustainable development of our resources.

Collectively, however, our search must be for world peace so that we can live up to our dreams, visions and God-given potential. I believe that the answer to the problem of bringing about world peace lies in our own hearts, not in the barrels of guns or military might. Here, in this great world Assembly, let our hearts enkindle a new torch to shine on the new path to world peace, from the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and beyond.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand, His Excellency Squadron Leader Prasong Soonsiri.

Mr. Soonsiri (Thailand): On behalf of the Government and people of Thailand, I extend warmest congratulations to Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that he will provide the General Assembly with the leadership to guide the session to a successful conclusion.

I should also like to pay tribute to Ambassador Insanally, the General Assembly's President at its forty-eighth session. My delegation very much appreciates his untiring and effective leadership and his dedication to the work of this body. Under his presidency, the General Assembly had an eventful year, and its role was enhanced in ways which were beneficial to the Organization.

Thailand joins the rest of the international community in congratulating the Government and people of South Africa on having established a united, democratic and non-racial country. They have shown us that compromise is possible and that even the most long-standing and bitter of conflicts can be resolved peacefully. This achievement is due entirely to the exceptional vision, courage and pragmatism of the country's leaders - in particular, President Nelson Mandela and Executive Deputy President F.W. de Klerk. Tribute must also be paid to the United Nations, and in particular to the Special Committee against Apartheid, for its contributions to the positive changes in South Africa.

There is another bright spot giving all of us hope for a more peaceful world. Since the Thai Government has long supported the Middle East peace process, the termination of the state of war between Jordan and Israel, announced in Washington in July this year, following last year's historic agreement between Israel and the PLO, gives all of us reason to rejoice. We hope that it will lead to further agreements on "other tracks" acceptable to all parties concerned, so that a durable peace in the Middle East may finally be achieved.

We also welcome the positive developments concerning the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula and hope that dialogue and negotiation between the parties concerned will eventually result in that part of the world enjoying lasting peace and stability.

However, in spite of the promising outlook for international peace and security, there remain political and military conflicts of both global and regional magnitude. It is therefore imperative that countries continue unfailing efforts to secure a stable and peaceful international environment. As a first step in this direction, the international community could support and cooperate in efforts towards comprehensive reform and total revitalization of the United Nations to enable the Organization to meet the new challenges of today's world and to assist Members efficiently in their peaceful endeavours.

Thailand pledges its continued support for the Secretary-General's proposals in "An Agenda for Peace". These constitute an innovative and practical framework for the maintenance of international peace and security and deserve serious consideration by all Member States.

In South-East Asia, realizing the need to ensure a secure and peaceful international environment, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) took the lead in promoting political and security dialogues and consultations in the Asia-Pacific region by initiating the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Designed to be a high-level consultative forum on political and security matters, the ARF held its first meeting in Bangkok on 25 July 1994, after the twenty-seventh ASEAN ministerial meeting. Nineteen ministers from countries in the Asia-Pacific region and from the European Union attended this historic meeting to discuss political and security cooperation issues, such as the latest developments on regional situations, and decided to carry out some practical confidence-building measures applicable to the Asia-Pacific region.

As Chairman of the first ARF meeting, Thailand is pleased with the results of the meeting and its achievements. In particular, Thailand is grateful for the kind cooperation it received from all countries concerned. Since the success of this first meeting, the ARF has become a viable forum for the promotion of trust as well as political and security cooperation within the Asia-Pacific region. The ARF has also demonstrated its potential to make substantive contributions towards the United Nations efforts at preventive diplomacy and at maintaining international peace and security.

In other words, the ARF got off to a good start. Thailand is fully aware that the first meeting of the ARF in Bangkok was only the beginning. For this reason, Thailand views the inter-sessional activities at various levels among officials from ARF countries as necessary for the ARF's continued success. These activities could help the ARF find its future direction and enable it to become more efficient and productive.

Political and military security are but one aspect of the bigger picture facing us. As we search for a new international order based on a common set of principles and values, we need to change our way of thinking. We also need a new culture of development cooperation and new definitions of the notions of security and development.

The winds of change have begun to sweep across the globe. We are now witnessing the creation of major landmarks of international consensus-building. In 1992, the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit set a new stage for global partnership on the environment and sustainable development. Last year (in Vienna), the World Conference on Human Rights was held, producing a world programme of action. Last month in Cairo we witnessed the International Conference on Population and Development. Next year in Copenhagen, the World Summit for Social Development will be held. This Summit will serve as a bridge between this year's Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and next year's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. It also presents a unique opportunity for the international community to respond, on a global level, to urgent human and social concerns that place people at the centre of the development process.

The Thai Government accords special importance to social development. In light of this, we have established a social cabinet dedicated to formulating policies and finding solutions to a number of pressing social problems. We have also organized a joint committee comprising members of the private sector and of Government and chaired by the Prime Minister. Its mandate is to oversee efforts to alleviate the social problems that beset a growing economy, such as those being experienced by my country and others in the region.

Thailand has participated and will continue to participate actively in all global deliberations. These conferences create new paradigms of international conduct which give rise to the various comprehensive global plans of action. They have also started the new process of redefining the notions of security and development.

Security in this final decade of the twentieth century goes well beyond the familiar concepts of old. It must involve people - how they live and how they exercise their choices. It should be security with a human face, because it must deal directly with political, economic, environmental and social aspects of our lives in a comprehensive manner.

Development, as pointed out by the Secretary-General, must be seen in its five interlinked dimensions: with peace as the foundation; the economy as the engine of progress; the environment as a basis for sustainability; justice as a pillar of society; and democracy as good governance. My country shares these perceptions and supports their premises as envisioned by the Secretary-General.

It is with this awareness that Thailand approaches its work on the international agenda for development. Such an agenda should reflect and indeed promote self-reliance as well as interdependence among Member States. There is no doubt that development is primarily a national responsibility. Yet, it is also a shared responsibility of the international community. It is our firm belief that the development effort of any State in today's world must be supported by a conducive international environment, based on free and fair trading practices. The completion of the Uruguay Round and the creation of the World Trade Organization now hold out the prospect of providing significant benefits to the world economy.

A United Nations agenda for development should not be given any less importance than the agenda for peace. These two intertwined issues must be the core of any effort to strengthen the role and activities of the United Nations as we approach the next century.

Together with the "An Agenda for Peace", "An agenda for development" should serve as an instrument for the coordination of activities within the United Nations, as well as between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, and other non-governmental organizations. It should be an instrument to create unity of purpose, at both the policy and operational levels, within the Organization. The United Nations cannot be a strong force for peace unless it is also a strong force for development.

The United Nations remains humanity's best hope for creating a more desirable world - a world with a conscience, a world which recognizes that humans everywhere, young or old, strong or weak, are at the centre of our communal and individual efforts. To this end, I should like to reaffirm Thailand's commitment to this vision, which cannot be fulfilled without the active participation of Member States. Thailand will do its part in contributing to this end. We hope that other countries will also chip in with their fair share of contributions. A world united by this vision and this unity of purpose will surely be a better place for us all and, more important, for our children and grandchildren.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Several representatives have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind members that, pursuant to decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): I am obliged to reply to the speech by the representative of Iraq, which attacked the United States, misrepresented the facts about Iraq's lack of compliance with Security Council resolutions and insulted the United Nations.

The issue here is not the United States record, but Iraq's record. Despite the claim of its representative at the outset of his speech to respect international law, Iraq is in simultaneous violation of more Security Council resolutions than any Member State in the history of the United Nations. It has sought to evade, ignore and negotiate away its obligations. The only approach it has not tried is compliance.

For more than three years, Iraq has failed to account for Kuwaiti and other prisoners and missing persons. It has yet to return all of the Kuwaiti property it stole. It continues to destroy systematically one of the world's richest ecological regions and to suppress brutally the human rights of its citizens, all in contravention of Security Council resolutions 687 (1991) and 688 (1991).

It is the height of cynicism for the Iraqi Government to appeal to the General Assembly on behalf of the suffering Iraqi people. This is the same Government which, years before "ethnic cleansing" was employed in Bosnia, erased hundreds of Kurdish villages from the map of Iraq and used chemical weapons against its own civilians.

The Security Council cares about the Iraqi people more than the Government of Iraq does. Iraq rejected the implementation of resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991), which would have helped feed ordinary Iraqis, not because the United States or anyone else imposed additional conditions, but because Iraq treated those resolutions, like all others, not as binding international law but only as the starting point for negotiations. Iraq continues to request sanctions Committee approval for import of luxury goods. None of Saddam's family is hungry, and his dwindling number of supporters still enjoy imported liquor and cigarettes. The Government of Iraq refuses to do more to help its people precisely because it knows that their suffering is the only Iraqi argument the world community views with sympathy.

Iraqi cooperation on weapons of mass destruction is grudging and incomplete. It has never revealed details about its past biological-weapons programme, and it is seeking to reactivate its network of equipment supply for these programmes. There is no reason to believe Iraq's promises in this regard. The Security Council can rely only upon an extensive long-term monitoring system, adequately tested over an adequate period of time.

A change in Iraqi behaviour in all of these areas is the programme of the Security Council, ratified in its resolutions. This, and no other, is the programme of the United States.

This morning's speech was a classic attempt to define white as black. Iraq is not the victim. Iraq is the aggressor, the initiator of the conflict. It has never accepted the simple fact, agreed upon by virtually every nation represented here, that its invasion of Kuwait was illegal from the beginning.

We had hoped that the Iraqi representative today would have addressed this core issue. Instead, he found himself still incapable of mentioning the word "Kuwait" in public, still unable to address the core issue of the conflict: Kuwait's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and borders.

Yesterday's statement by the Revolutionary Command Council threatening action against the United Nations if the Security Council does not meet Iraq's demands was a giant step backwards in meeting the fundamental criterion of Security Council resolution 687 (1991): that the Council be assured of Iraq's peaceful intentions. This morning in New York we heard promises of compliance; from Baghdad we hear threats and defiance. The two statements may be dressed differently - one as a lamb, one as a wolf - but they convey the same fact: that the Government of Iraq continues to believe that the use of force and threats against its neighbours is legitimate.

Even as we listened to placating words from the Iraqi representative, the facts on the ground were quite different. Iraq is moving elements of two of its premier Republican Guard divisions, the Hammurabi and Al-Nida armoured divisions, from northern and central Iraq southwards, close to the Kuwaiti border. They are deploying with ammunition and other logistical supplies. I do not believe any member of this Assembly could characterize these facts as evidence of peaceful intentions. On the contrary, these military facts belie everything we have just heard from the representative of Iraq.

Let it be absolutely clear to the Iraqi Government that a repetition of its past mistakes will be met by my Government with the same resolve as before.

Moreover, seeking to precipitate a crisis will not encourage the Security Council to speed the lifting of sanctions; it will have exactly the opposite effect.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I feel obliged to respond, in exercise of the right of reply, to the statement made here on 5 October by the representative of Greece, who alleged that the Greek minority in Albania is denied human rights as it was during the previous, Communist regime. I would respond by citing the following facts.

In free and fair elections held during the last two years, the Greek minority cast 49,000 votes - that is, 1.03 per cent of the total number of voters. Article 26 of the constitutional law on fundamental rights and freedoms, adopted by the Albanian Parliament on 31 March 1993, stipulates that

> "Individuals belonging to minorities shall enjoy, without discrimination and with equality before the law, fundamental human rights and freedoms. They may freely express, preserve and develop their own ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity, teach and be taught in their mother tongue and associate in organizations and associations to protect their interests and identity".

That provision has been fully implemented in practice. With regard to the Greek minority, I would mention some important aspects of its implementation, such as the educational system in the Greek language. It comprises 85 schools at all levels including university, 46 classes of which have fewer than 10 pupils, whereas the basic rule that applies in the country requires that classes should have not less than 20 students. The Government's decision on education dated 22 August 1994 increases the opportunity for, and offers the possibility of, education in the mother tongue for minority people living in areas of mixed population. It took the Greek Government only one day to describe that decision as a restriction of the right to education of the Greek minority in Albania.

Allow me to point out that the overall integration of the Greek minority in all spheres of life in Albania is already an established fact. The Greek minority is represented in parliament by two members from its own party and four others from other parties; in the executive branch by cabinet ministers, high officials and ambassadors; and in the judiciary by judges in the constitutional court and other low-level courts.

In the local government, the Greek minority is represented by 13 chairmen of communes, 159 councillors of district councils and 32 councillors of civic councils and so on. There are Greek newspapers, several hours of radio broadcasts in Greek and its own cultural and political organizations.

Since the establishment of the democratic regime, the Greek minority enjoys the right to travel freely to Greece and elsewhere.

During the Hoxha communist regime, many people who attempted to cross the barbed-wired border were killed. In contrast to the previous regime, when all churches were banned, now, thanks to the democratic regime, churches are built and the liturgy is given in Greek in all villages inhabited by minority people, as witnessed by various observers and missions from Greece and other countries and from different international organizations.

As regards the trial of five Albanian citizens of Greek origin, constantly referred to by the Greek Government, and again by its representative at this session, I should like to make clear that the defendants were charged with collusion with the secret services of Greece. The court sentenced them for smuggling several hundred firearms in an organized manner, for recruiting and sending Albanian citizens of Greek nationality to Greek military schools without the knowledge of the Albanian Government, of gathering secret military information and of illegal possession of weapons.

The Albanian delegation is ready to provide any interested country with the dossier containing pertinent materials confirming such activities. It is appropriate here to emphasize that the guilt of the defendants has never been questioned, whether in the resolutions or in the recourse mentioned by the Greek delegation or in any other reports.

Greece, whose State or quasi-State organs appear to be involved in the findings of this trial, has reacted strongly in all international institutions. Prejudging the trial, the Greek Government began its campaign long before the opening of the trial, trying to influence the verdict of the district court of Tirane. On the other hand, through a series of pressure and other retaliatory actions, such as the massive maltreatment and expulsion of 70,000 Albanian emigrants working in Greece and the blocking of the 35 million ECUs that the European Union allocated to Albania to assist in its development, the Greek Government has attempted to compel the democratic government to violate the recently adopted democratic legislation on the separation of powers and has intervened to suspend the trial. This is a hostile act, unacceptable to any country.

As to the report of Mr. Andres Zeplinsky, to which the representative of Greece referred, I would say that there is no official report drafted by that person. The only existing document entitled "Report of the trial monitoring in Tirane" - distributed at the meeting of the permanent committee of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Vienna on 19 September 1994, reads as follows:

> "The trial was open and attended by many journalists and observers from Greece and different countries."

Even in this document, there is no evidence of any reservation concerning the charges or the innocence of the five defendants.

Regarding, the allegation that the defendants were tortured during the investigation process, I would like to draw attention to the fact that the High Commissioner for National Minorities of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Mr. Van De Stoel, met with the defendants on a one-to-one basis without the presence of the Albanian authorities. In his briefing to the permanent committee in Vienna, Mr. Van De Stoel said that none of the defendants had complained about their treatment in prison. The above-mentioned document of the CSCE also states that "the Albanian judicial system has made considerable progress since independence".

Concerning the question of the Albanian immigrants in Greece, Albanians have always appreciated the generosity of the Greek people. However, it must be pointed out that the stance of the Greek Government is quite different from that of the Greek people and violates the relevant internationally-recognized standards.

I must stress that the Greek Government has failed to offer a solution to the legalization of the status of the Albanian immigrants despite Albania's insistence that it wishes to help solve this problem.

With regard to economic assistance, I have not much to add since the Greek representative left no room for doubt about the position of Greece, which is already well known, namely that Greece persists in blocking the assistance of the European Union to Albania. Nevertheless, I must add that it is difficult for the Albanian people to understand how Greece could block the generous aid of the taxpayers and of the Governments of the European member States only to serve its nationalistic ambitions.

It is regrettable that the Greek Government continues to distort the truth about the large Albanian minority living in Greece from time immemorial and in its own lands. The reference to the Chams as collaborators with the Nazis is but an attempt to justify the massacre against the Cham people in 1944 and 1945 when many of them were forcibly expelled and sought refuge in Albania. Neither the former Greek authorities nor the present Government have allowed them to reclaim their property.

In his statement, the Greek representative did not explain why Greece insists on denying the existence of the Albanian minority in Greece. I would recommend that he at least consult the last report of the British Helsinki Human Rights Group of May 1994 regarding the situation of the Albanian Macedonian and Turkish minorities in Greece to see how far behind Greece is, as compared to Albania, in abiding by the commitments deriving from international documents on minority rights.

Despite the current difficulties, my country continues to hope that Greece will respond positively to Albania's open invitation to an unconditional dialogue for we are convinced that the crisis in the relations between the two countries can and ought to be resolved through dialogue. Our commitment to this end, as stated last week by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania, will be strong and consistent.

Finally, I would like to say that the presence of Albania in the family of democratic nations has been decided by the free vote of the Albanian people. No nationalism whatsoever will succeed in bringing about a shift in its orientation towards full integration into Europe.

Prince Sisowath (Cambodia) *(interpretation from French):* This afternoon, Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam stated that he was concerned over the new Cambodian law on immigration.

My delegation has the honour of informing the Assembly that this law was adopted by a very large majority in the National Assembly of Cambodia, a sovereign State that emerged from the elections in our country, which were supervised by the United Nations.

The law reflects the concerns of the Cambodian people, responds to the current situation and is applied uniformly to all foreigners without discrimination. Like any law, the law on immigration will enter into force only when the text relating to its application has been drawn up. The text will take into account the higher interests of Cambodia as well as the concerns expressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam.

My delegation can give every assurance that there will be no decision taken for mass expulsions of foreigners. Any measure to implement the law and the regulations relevant thereto will be subject to joint consideration by the countries concerned, among others the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, His Highness Prince Sihanouk, has sent a letter to his Vietnamese counterpart offering to send a group of experts to negotiate on the problem of Vietnamese residents in Cambodia.

As regards the question of human rights, I should like to inform the Assembly that our Constitution has been drawn up in strict conformity with the recommendations formulated in the Paris Agreements of October 1991 and in the Conventions signed by the National Supreme Council on behalf of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Mr. Al-Qaysi (Iraq): The representative of the United States exercised her right of reply in respect of the statement made this morning by my Deputy Prime Minister. She alleged that our statement attacked the United States, misrepresented the facts about Iraq's lack of compliance with Security Council resolutions and insulted the United Nations. Evidently, the representative of the United States was repeating the same accusations that she levelled against my country in the periodic reviews of the Security Council, the last of which was held on 14 September 1994.

It is quite obvious to me that the statement of the representative of the United States is an open attempt to draw my delegation into a rhetorical exchange, an attempt which I shall resist.

Facts are facts. The statement of my Deputy Prime Minister this morning presented to the General Assembly a factual account which we are prepared to prove - an account that even American newspapers say is true. I would refer those who wish to verify that fact to this morning's issue of the Washington Post. The United States is in fact the permanent member of the Security Council that, in violation of the Charter, is blocking the consequences of Iraq's implementation of Security Council resolutions.

I wonder, therefore, whether calling in the General Assembly for the correct implementation of its commitment to the Charter by a Member State can be characterized as an insult to the General Assembly.

One would think, to listen to the statement of the representative of the United States, that we in Iraq should not only be accountable before the United States for what we say, but we should also be accountable for what we do not say. The representative of the United States says that the issue here is not the record of the United States, but the record of Iraq. I disagree. The record that is at issue in our statement is the record of the members of the Security Council, notably that of one or two permanent members when they block the correct process of the implementation of commitments under the Charter.

In our view, we are entitled, in accordance with the clear-cut obligations set forth in the Charter, to ask the General Assembly what we should do. Although these very resolutions were drafted by the United States itself, they are not being implemented - not because the Council does not want to implement them, but because the United States does not want them to be implemented.

As for the statement of the representative of the United States to the effect that the facts on the ground were quite different from what we stated in our statement, and the allegation that there were troop movements, let us reflect. An allegation is an allegation. Before it is proven, it remains only an allegation. If we are to base conclusions on allegations, then it would mean, as seems quite clear from the statement of the representative of the United States, that even the movement of troops within State boundaries is not an act of peaceful intention.

When the representative of the United States talks about statements that are emanating from Baghdad, let her be fair and equitable, and acknowledge for once that blocking the correct process of the implementation of Security Council resolutions which Iraq has implemented for so long, and perpetuating the suffering of our whole nation, certainly results in frustration and anger. Are we not even allowed to express our frustration and anger, according to the representative of the United States?

To conclude, let me repeat that facts are facts. Commitments under the Charter are clear. The rights and obligations of Member States under the Charter are clear. We are talking about the present; we are not talking about the past. We are not here to play worn-out records simply for the sake of not allowing the correct process of implementation to continue.

It is a fact that the United States is the permanent member of the Council that is blocking the implementation of the provisions of resolution 687 (1991) in favour of Iraq - the very resolution that it drafted itself. I fail to see, in the reply of the representative of the United States, anything that refutes what we said in our statement this morning.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.